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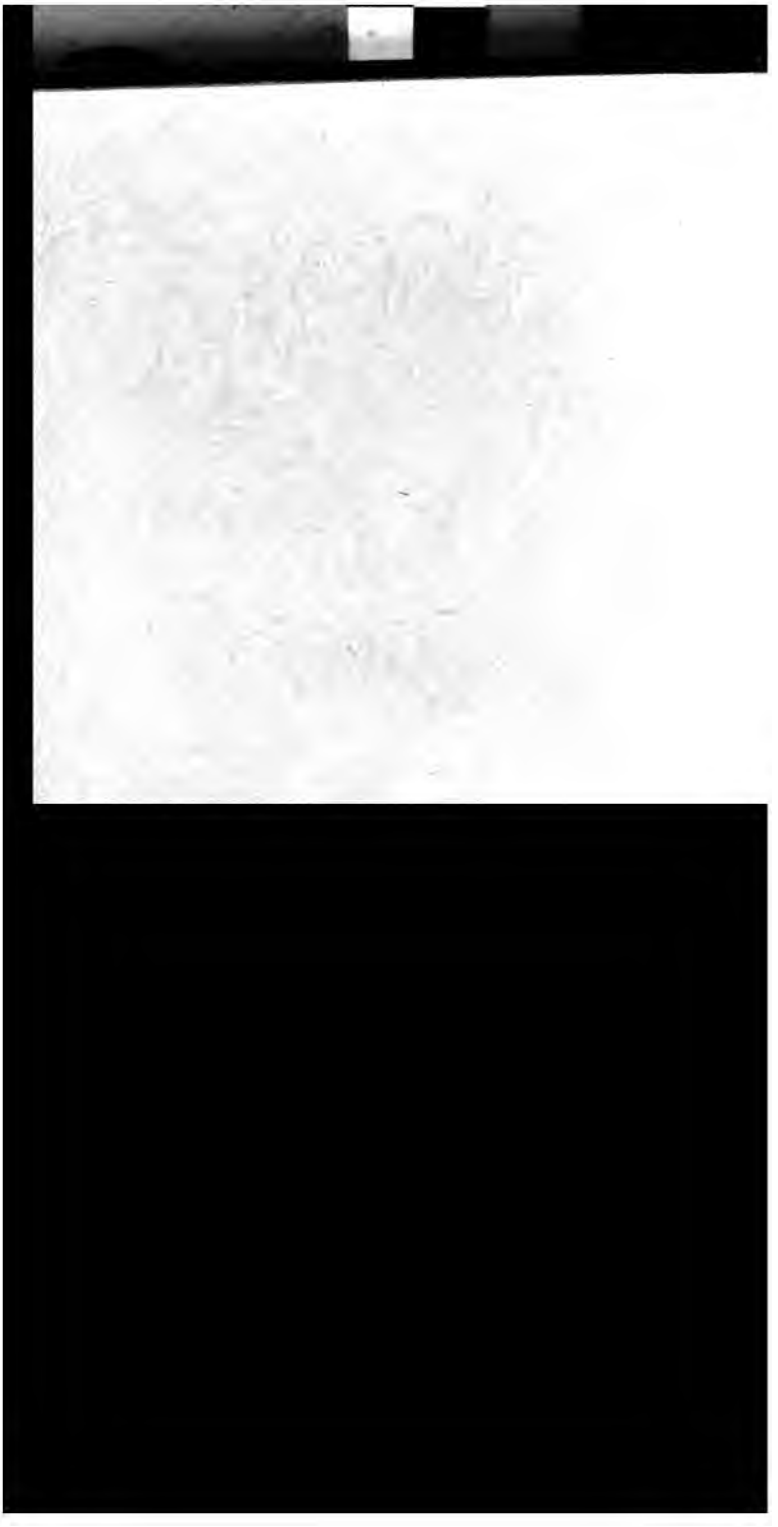

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THE WRITINGS
OF
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH

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AND NOTES BY EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE
AND OTHERS

ILLUSTRATED WITH STEEL PORTRAITS AND ENGRAVINGS FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGNS BY BROWNE, CRUIKSHANK LEECH, AND OTHERS

IN THIRTY-TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME XXXI

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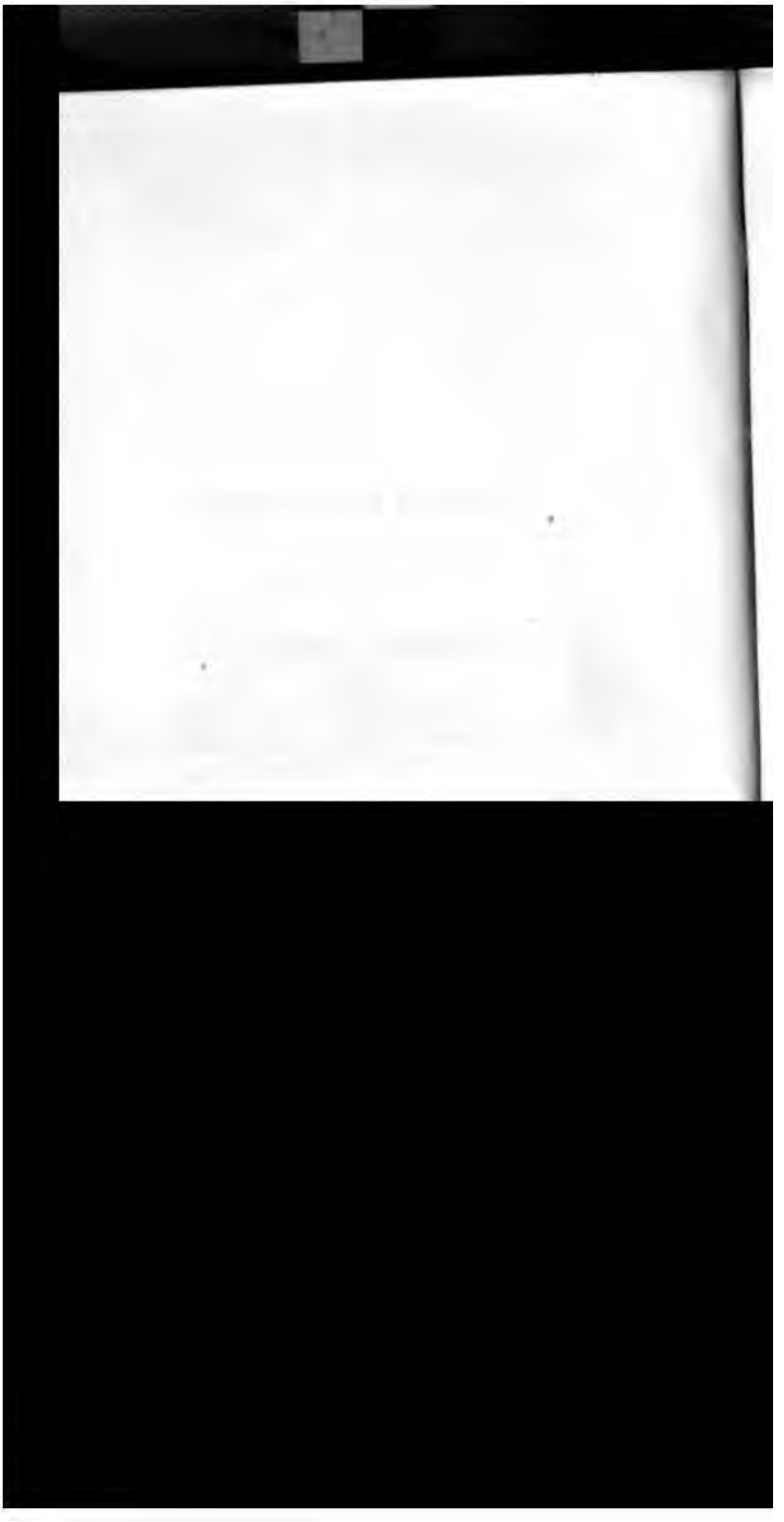

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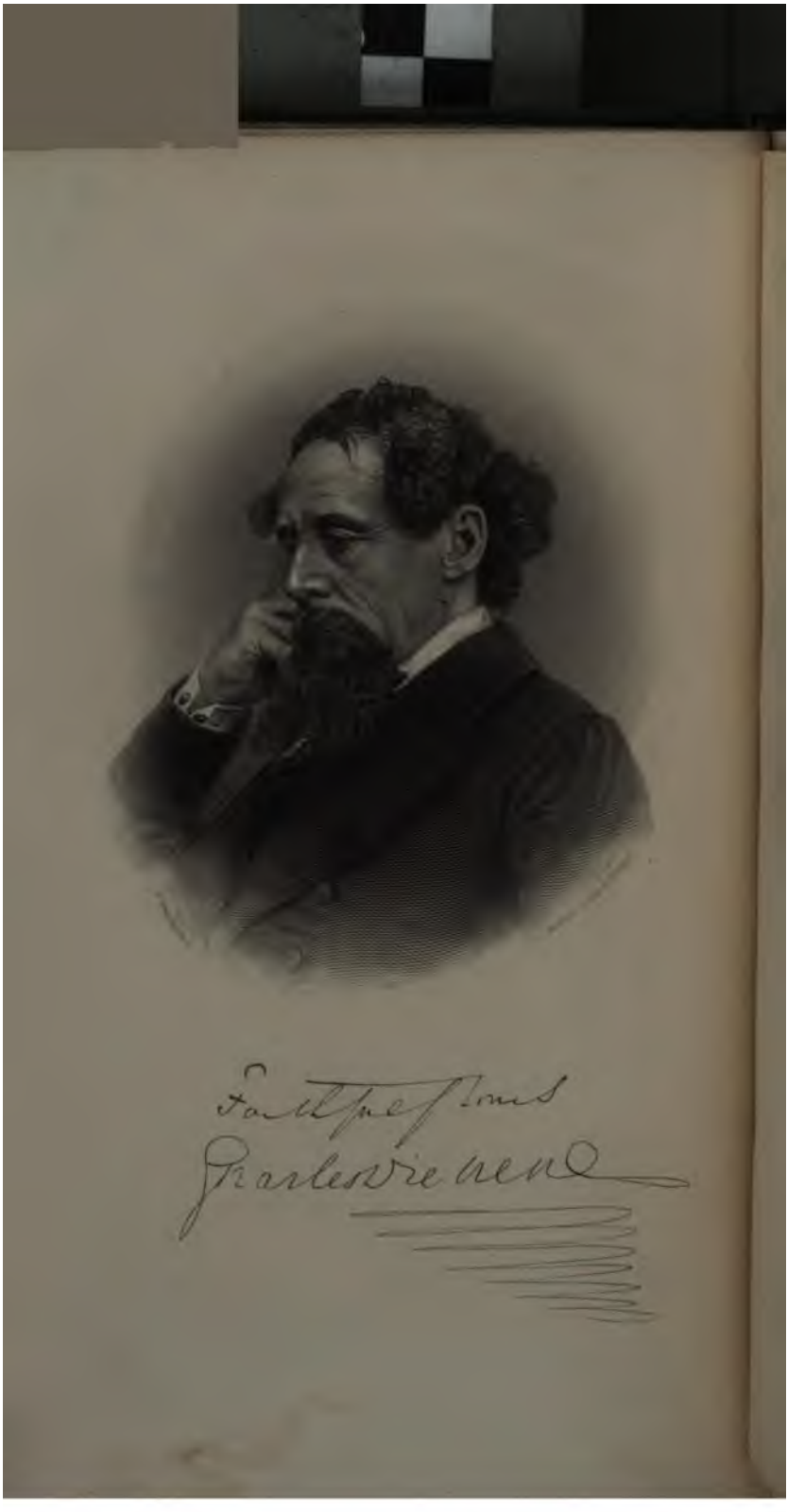

LIFE, LETTERS, AND SPEECHES

OF

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE PRINCIPAL ILLUSTRATORS OF DICKENS'S WORKS

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
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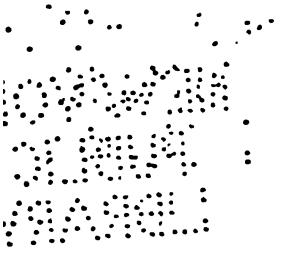

The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.

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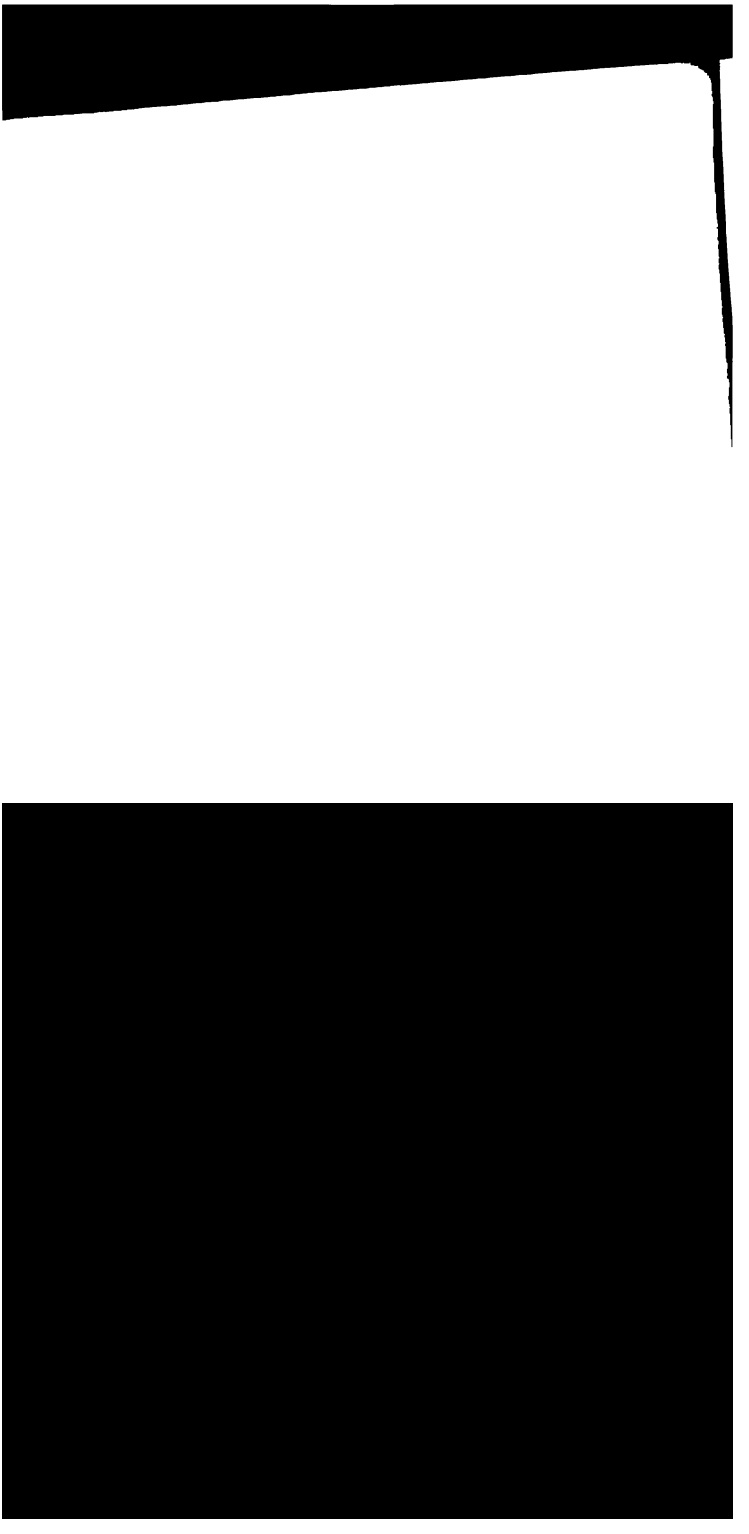


LIFE, LETTERS, AND SPEECHES OF CHARLES DICKENS

LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

CCLXXXIII. W. H. WILLS

49, Champs Elysées, Sunday, January 6, 1856.

My dear Wills, — I should like Morley to do a strike article, and to work into it the greater part of what is here. But I cannot represent myself as holding the opinion that all strikes among this unhappy class of society, who find it so difficult to get a peaceful hearing, are always necessarily wrong, because I don't think so. To open a discussion of the question by saying that the men are "*of course* entirely and painfully in the wrong," surely would be monstrous in any one. Show them to be in the wrong here, but in the name of the eternal heavens show why, upon the merits of this question. Nor can I possibly adopt the representation that these men are wrong because by throwing themselves out of work they throw other people, possibly without their consent. If such a principle had anything in it, there could have been no civil war, no raising by Hampden of a troop of horse, to the detriment of Buckinghamshire agriculture, no self-sacrifice in the political world. And oh, good God, when —— treats of the suffering of wife and children, can he suppose that these mistaken men don't feel it in the depths of their hearts, and don't honestly and honourably, most devoutly and faithfully, believe that for those very children, when they shall have children, they are bearing all these miseries now!

I hear from Mrs. Fillonneau that her husband was obliged to leave town suddenly before he could get your parcel, consequently he has not brought it; and White's sovereigns — unless you have got them back again — are either lying out of circulation *somewhere, or are being* spent by somebody else. I *will write again on Tuesday.* My article is to begin the inclosed.

Ever faithfully.

CCLXXXIV. MARK LEMON

49, Champs Elysées, Paris, Monday, January 7, 1856.

My dear Mark, — I want to know how "Jack and the Beanstalk" goes. I have a notion from a notice — a favourable notice, however — which I saw in "Galignani," that Webster has let down the comic business.

In a piece at the Ambigu, called the "Rentrée à Paris," a mere scene in honour of the return of the troops from the Crimea the other day, there is a novelty which I think it worth letting you know of, as it is easily available, either for a serious or a comic interest — the introduction of a supposed electric telegraph. The scene is the railway terminus at Paris, with the electric telegraph-office on the prompt side, and the clerks *with their backs to the audience* — much more real than if they were, as they infallibly would be, staring about the house — working the needles; and the little bell perpetually ringing. There are assembled to greet the soldiers, all the easily and naturally imagined elements of interest — old veteran fathers, young children, agonised mothers, sisters and brothers, girl lov-

wounded?" Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out — "No. He has not yet upon him those marks of bravery in the glorious service of his country which his dear old father bears" (father being lamed and invalided). Last of all, the widowed mother. Marquis sends message — such a regiment, such a company — "Is my only son safe?" Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out — "He was first upon the heights of Alma." General cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. "He was made a sergeant at Inkermann." Another cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. — "He was made colour-sergeant at Sebastopol." Another cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out — "He was the first man who leaped with the French banner on the Malakhoff tower." Tremendous cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out — "But he was struck down there by a musket-ball, and — Troops have proceeded. Will arrive in half a minute after this." Mother abandons all hope; general commiseration; troops rush in, down a platform; son only wounded, and embraces her.

As I have said, and as you will see, this is available for any purpose. But done with equal distinction and rapidity, it is a tremendous effect, and got by the simplest means in the world. There is nothing in the piece, but it was impossible not to be moved and excited by the telegraph part of it.

I hope you have seen something of Stanny, and have been to pantomimes with him, and have drunk to the absent Dick. I miss you, my dear old boy, at the play, woefully, and miss the walk home, and the partings at the corner of Tavistock Square. And when I go by myself, I come home stewing "Little Dorrit" in my head; and the best part of *my* play is (or ought to be) in Gordon Street.

I have written to Beaucourt about taking that breezy house — a little improved — for the summer, and I hope you and yours will come there often and stay there long. My present idea, if nothing should arise to unroot me sooner, is to stay here until the middle of May, then plant the family at Boulogne, and come with Catherine and Georgy home for two or three weeks. When I shall next run across I don't know, but I suppose next *month.*

We are up to our knees in mud here. Literally in vehement *despair, I walked down the* avenue outside the Barrière de

l'Etoile here yesterday, and went straight on among the trees. I came back with top-boots of mud on. Nothing will cleanse the streets. Numbers of men and women are for ever scooping and sweeping in them, and they are always one lake of yellow mud. All my trousers go to the tailor's every day, and are ravelled out at the heels every night. Washing is awful.

Tell Mrs. Lemon, with my love, that I have bought her some Eau d'Or, in grateful remembrance of her knowing what it is, and crushing the tyrant of her existence by resolutely refusing to be put down when that monster would have silenced her. You may imagine the loves and messages that are now being poured in upon me by all of them, so I will give none of them; though I am pretending to be very scrupulous about it, and am looking (I have no doubt) as if I were writing them down with the greatest care. Ever affectionately.

CCLXXXV. WILKIE COLLINS

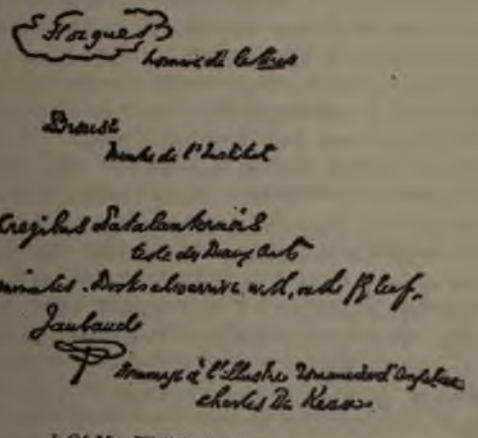
49, Champs Elysées, Saturday, January 19, 1856.

My dear Collins, — I had no idea you were so far on with

addle-headed and bored, that if you were here, I should propose an instantaneous rush to the Trois Frères. Under existing circumstances I have no consolation.

I think THE portrait[1] is the most astounding thing ever beheld upon this globe. It has been shrieked over by the united family as "Oh! the very image!" I went down to the *entresol* the moment I opened it, and submitted it to the Plorn — then engaged, with a half-franc musket, in capturing a Malakhoff of chairs. He looked at it very hard, and gave it as his opinion that it was Misser Hegg. We suppose him to have confounded the Colonel with Jollins. I met Madame George Sand the other day at a dinner got up by Madame Viardot for that great purpose. The human mind cannot conceive any one more astonishingly opposed to all my preconceptions. If I had been shown her in a state of repose, and asked what I thought her to be, I should have said: "The Queen's monthly nurse." *Au reste*, she has nothing of the *bas bleu* about her, and is very quiet and agreeable.

The way in which mysterious Frenchmen call, and want to embrace me, suggests to any one who knows me intimately such infamous lurking, slinking, getting behind doors, evading, lying — so much mean resort to craven flights, dastard subterfuges, and miserable poltroonery — on my part, that I merely suggest the arrival of cards like this: —



[1] *Of Mr. Wilkie Collins.*

— and I then write letters of terrific *empressement*, with assurances of all sorts of profound considerations, and never by any chance become visible to the naked eye.

At the Porte St. Martin they are doing the "Orestes," put into French verse by Alexandre Dumas. Really one of the absurdest things I ever saw. The scene of the tomb, with all manner of classical females, in black, grouping themselves on the lid, and on the steps, and on each other, and in every conceivable aspect of obtrusive impossibility, is just like the window of one of those artists in hair, who address the friends of deceased persons. To-morrow week a fête is coming off at the Jardin d'Hiver, next door but one here, which I must certainly go to. The fête of the company of the Folies Nouvelles! The ladies of the company are to keep stalls, and are to sell to Messieurs the Amateurs orange-water and lemonade. Paul le Grand is to promenade among the company, dressed as Pierrot. Kalm, the big-faced comic singer, is to do the like, dressed as a Russian Cossack. The entertainments are to conclude with "La Polka des Bêtes féroces, par la Troupe entière des Folies Nouvelles." I wish, without invasion of the rights of British sub-

CCLXXXVI. MISS MARY BOYLE

49, Champs Elysées, Paris, January 28, 1856.

My dear Mary, — I am afraid you will think me an abandoned ruffian for not having acknowledged your more than handsome, warm-hearted letter before now. But, as usual, I have been so occupied, and so glad to get up from my desk and wallow in the mud (at present about six feet deep here), that pleasure correspondence is just the last thing in the world I have had leisure to take to. Business correspondence with all sorts and conditions of men and women, O my Mary! is one of the dragons I am perpetually fighting; and the more I throw it, the more it stands upon its hind legs, rampant, and throws me.

Yes, on that bright cold morning when I left Peterboro', I felt that the best thing I could do was to say that word that I would do anything in an honest way to avoid saying, at one blow, and make off. I was so sorry to leave you all! You can scarcely imagine what a chill and blank I felt on that Monday evening at Rockingham. It was so sad to me, and engendered a constraint so melancholy and peculiar, that I doubt if I were ever much more out of sorts in my life. Next morning, when it was light and sparkling out of doors, I felt more at home again. But when I came in from seeing poor dear Watson's grave, Mrs. Watson asked me to go up in the gallery, which I had last seen in the days of our merry play. We went up, and walked into the very part he had made and was so fond of, and she looked out of one window and I looked out of another, and for the life of me I could not decide in my own heart whether I should console or distress her by going and taking her hand, and saying something of what was naturally in my mind. So I said nothing, and we came out again, and on the whole perhaps it was best; for I have no doubt we understood each other very well without speaking a word.

Sheffield was a tremendous success and an admirable audience. They made me a present of table-cutlery after the reading was over; and I came away by the mail-train within three quarters of an *hour, changing my dress* and getting on my wrappers *partly in the fly, partly at the* inn, partly on the platform. *When we got among the* Lincolnshire fens it began to snow.

That changed to sleet, that changed to rain; the frost was all gone as we neared London, and the mud has all come. At two or three o'clock in the morning I stopped at Peterboro' again, and thought of you all disconsolately. The lady in the refreshment-room was very hard upon me, harder even than those fair enslavers usually are. She gave me a cup of tea, as if I were a hyena, and she my cruel keeper with a strong dislike to me. I mingled my tears with it, and had a petrified bun of enormous antiquity in miserable meekness.

It is clear to me that climates are gradually assimilating over a great part of the world, and that in the most miserable part of our year there is very little to choose between London and Paris, except that London is not so muddy. I have never seen dirtier or worse weather than we have had here since I returned. In desperation I went out to the Barrières last Sunday on a headlong walk, and came back with my very eyebrows smeared with mud. Georgina is usually invisible during the walking-time of the day. A turned-up nose may be seen in the midst of splashes, but nothing more.

I am settling to work again, and my horrible restlessness

pardner and the blessed babbies. When shall we meet again, I wonder, and go somewhere! Ah!

Believe me ever, my dear Mary,
Yours truly and affectionately,
JOE.

(That does n't look plain.)

JOE.

CCLXXXVII. MISS HOGARTH

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Friday, February 8, 1856.

MY DEAR GEORGY, — I must write this at railroad speed, for I have been at it all day, and have numbers of letters to cram into the next half hour. I began the morning in the City, for the Theatrical Fund; went on to Shepherd's Bush; came back to leave cards for Mr. Baring and Mr. Bates; ran across Piccadilly to Stratton Street, stayed there an hour, and shot off here. I have been in four cabs to-day, at a cost of thirteen shillings. Am going to dine with Mark and Webster at half-past four, and finish the evening at the Adelphi.

The dinner was very successful. Charley was in great force, and floored Peter Cunningham and the Audit Office on a question about some bill transactions with Baring's. The other guests were B. and E., Shirley Brooks, Forster, and that 's all. The dinner admirable. I never had a better. All the wine I sent down from Tavistock House. Anne waited, and looked well and happy, very much brighter altogether. It gave me great pleasure to see her so improved. Just before dinner I got all the letters from home. They could not have arrived more opportunely.

The godfather's present looks charming now it is engraved, and John is just now going off to take it to Mrs. Yates. To-morrow Wills and I are going to Gad's Hill. It will occupy the whole day, and will just leave me time to get home to dress for dinner.

And that 's all that I have to say, except that the first number of "Little Dorrit" has gone to forty thousand, and the other one fast following.

My best love to Catherine, and to Mamey and Katey, and *Walter and Harry, and the noble* Plorn. I am grieved to hear

about his black eye, and fear that I shall find it in the green and purple state on my return.

Ever affectionately.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF CHARLES DICKENS,
A DISTRESSED FOREIGNER,

SHEWETH, — That your Petitioner has not been able to write one word to-day, or to fashion forth the dimmest shade of the faintest ghost of an idea.

That your Petitioner is therefore desirous of being taken out, and is not at all particular where.

That your Petitioner, being imbecile, says no more. But will ever, etc. (whatever that may be).

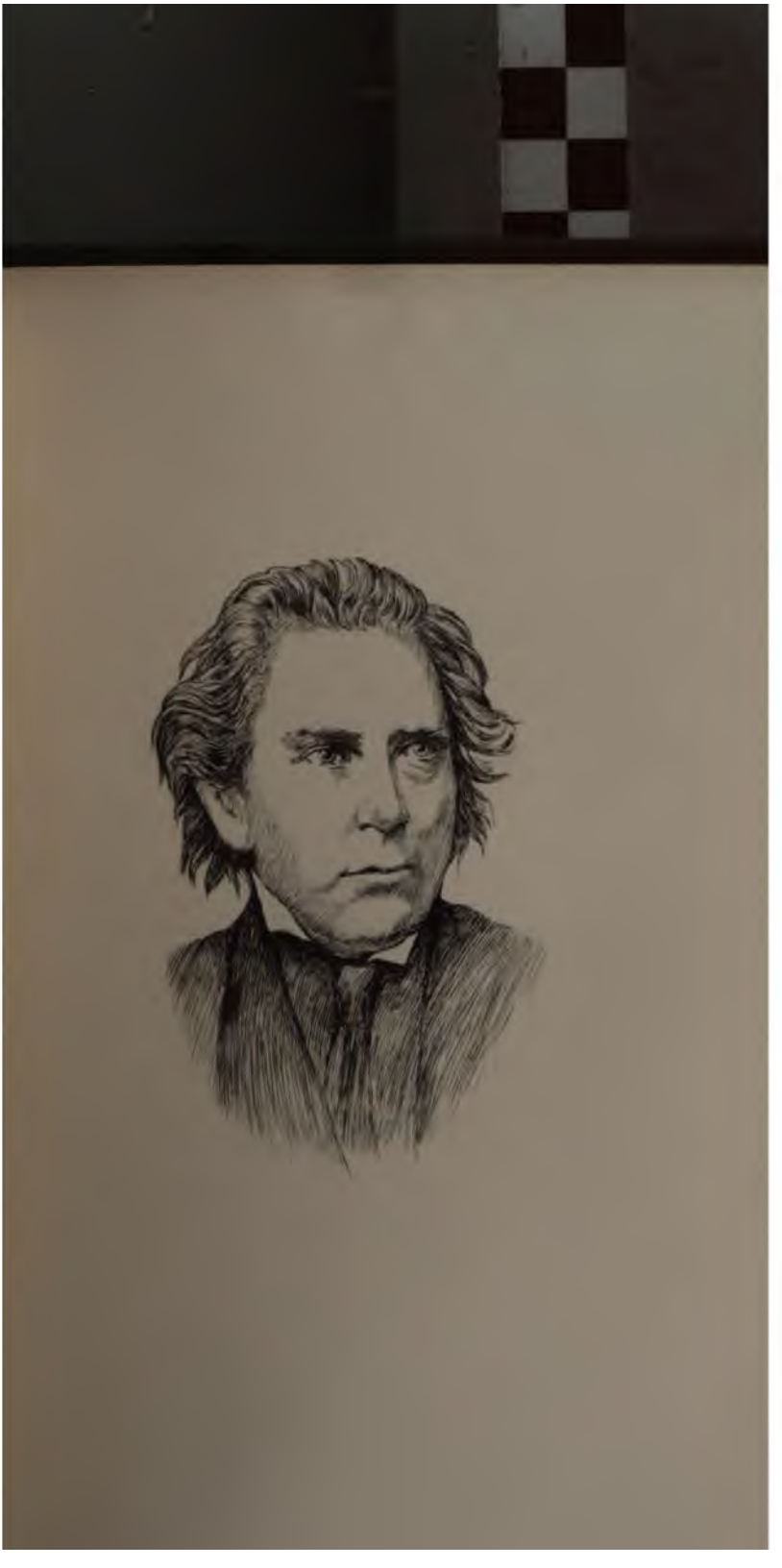
PARIS, March 3, 1856.

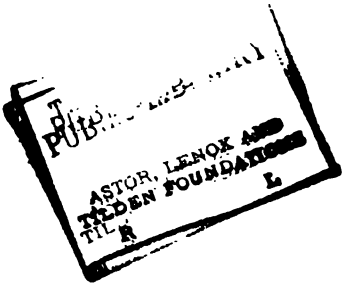
CCLXXXVIII. DOUGLAS JERROLD

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS" OFFICE, March 6, 1856.

MY DEAR JERROLD, — Buckstone has been with me to-day

Douglas Jerrold




ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

CCLXXXIX. MISS HOGARTH

"Household Words" Office, Tuesday, March 11, 1856.[1]

My dear Georgy, — I have been in bed half the day with my cold, which is excessively violent, consequently have to write in a great hurry to save the post.

Tell Catherine that I have the most prodigious, overwhelming, crushing, astounding, blinding, deafening, pulverising, scarifying secret, of which Forster is the hero, imaginable by the whole efforts of the whole British population. It is a thing of that kind that, after I knew it (from himself), this morning, I lay down flat as if an engine and tender had fallen upon me.

Love to Catherine (not a word of Forster before any one else), and to Mamey, Katey, Harry, and the noble Plorn. Tell Collins, with my kind regards, that Forster has just pronounced to me that "Collins is a decidedly clever fellow." I hope he is a better fellow in health, too. Ever affectionately.

CCXC. THE SAME

"Household Words," Friday, March 14, 1856.

My dear Georgy, — I am amazed to hear of the snow (I don't know why, but it excited John this morning beyond measure); though we have had the same east wind here, and *the* cold and *my* cold have both been intense.

Yesterday evening Webster, Mark, Stanny, and I went to the Olympic, where the Wigans ranged us in a row in a gorgeous and immense private box, and where we saw "Still Waters Run Deep." I laughed (in a conspicuous manner) to that extent at Emery, when he received the dinner-company, that the people were more amused by me than by the piece. I don't think I ever saw anything meant to be funny that struck me as so extraordinarily droll. I could n't get over it at all. After the piece we went round, by Wigan's invitation, to drink with him. It being positively impossible to get Stanny off the stage, we stood in the wings during the burlesque. Mrs. Wigan seemed really glad to see her old manager, and the company overwhelmed *him with embraces. They* had nearly all been at the *meeting in the morning.*

[1] *This note was written after hearing from* Mr. Forster of his intended marriage.

I have seen Charley only twice since I came to London, having regularly been in bed until midday. To my amazement, my eye fell upon him at the Adelphi yesterday.

This day I have paid the purchase-money for Gad's Hill Place. After drawing the cheque, I turned round to give it to Wills (£1,790), and said: "Now is n't it an extraordinary thing — look at the day — Friday! I have been nearly drawing it half a dozen times, when the lawyers have not been ready, and here it comes round upon a Friday, as a matter of course."

Kiss the noble Plorn a dozen times for me, and tell him I drank his health yesterday, and wished him many happy returns of the day; also that I hope he will not have broken all his toys before I come back.

Ever affectionately.

CCXCI. W. C. MACREADY

49, Champs Elysées, Paris, Saturday, March 22, 1856.

My dear Macready, — I want you — you being quite well again, as I trust you are, and resolute to come to Paris — so to

thing whatever remained but bricks and smelted iron lying on a great black desert, the theatre still looked so wonderfully like its old self grown gigantic that I never saw so strange a sight. The wall dividing the front from the stage still remained, and the iron pass-doors stood ajar in an impossible and inaccessible frame.* The arches that supported the stage were there, and the arches that supported the pit; and in the centre of the latter lay something like a Titanic grapevine that a hurricane had pulled up by the roots, twisted, and flung down there; this was the great chandelier. Gye had kept the men's wardrobe at the top of the house over the great entrance staircase; when the roof fell in it came down bodily, and all that part of the ruins was like an old Babylonic pavement, bright rays tessellating the black ground, sometimes in pieces so large that I could make out the clothes in the "Trovatore."

I should run on for a couple of hours if I had to describe the spectacle as I saw it, wherefore I will immediately muzzle myself. All here unite in kindest loves to dear Miss Macready, to Katie, Lillie, Benvenuta, my godson, and the noble Johnny. We are charmed to hear such happy accounts of Willy and Ned, and send our loving remembrance to them in the next letters. All Parisian novelties you shall see and hear for yourself.

Ever, my dearest Macready,
Your affectionate friend.

P. S. — Mr. F.'s aunt sends her defiant respects.

CCXCII. W. C. MACREADY

49, Avenue des Champs Elysées, Paris,
Thursday Night, March 27, 1856 (after post-time).

My dearest Macready, — If I had had any idea of your coming (see how naturally I use the word when I am three hundred miles off!) to London so soon, I would never have written one word about the jump over next week. I am vexed that I did so, but as I did I will not now propose a change in the arrangements, as I know how methodical you tremendously old fellows are. *That 's your secret* I suspect. That 's the way *in which the blood of the Mirabels* mounts in your aged veins, *even at your time of life.*

How charmed I shall be to see you, and we all shall be, I will not attempt to say. On that expected Sunday you will lunch at Amiens but not dine, because we shall wait dinner for you, and you will merely have to tell that driver in the glazed hat to come straight here. When the Whites left I added their little apartment to this little apartment, consequently you shall have a snug bedroom (is it not waiting expressly for you?) overlooking the Champs Elysées. As to the arm-chair in my heart, no man on earth — but, good God! you know all about it.

You will find us in the queerest of little rooms all alone, except that the son of Collins the painter (who writes a good deal in "Household Words") dines with us every day. Scheffer and Scribe shall be admitted for one evening, because they know how to appreciate you. The Emperor we will not ask unless you expressly wish it; it makes a fuss.

If you have no appointed hotel at Boulogne, go to the Hôtel des Bains, there demand "Marguerite," and tell her that I commended you to her special care. It is the best house within my experience in France; Marguerite the best housekeeper in the world.

"Little Child's Birthday Party," is quite delightful. There are many interesting pictures. When you see Scheffer, tell him from me that Eastlake, in his speech at the dinner, referred to the portrait as "a contribution from a distinguished man of genius in France, worthy of himself and of his subject."

I did the maddest thing last night, and am deeply penitent this morning. We stayed at Webster's till any hour, and they wanted me, at last, to make punch, which could n't be done when the jug was brought, because (to Webster's burning indignation) there was only one lemon in the house. Hereupon I then and there besought the establishment in general to come and drink punch on Thursday night, after the play; on which occasion it will become necessary to furnish fully the table with some cold viands from Fortnum and Mason's. Mark has looked in since I began this note, to suggest that the great festival may come off at "Household Words" instead. I am inclined to think it a good idea, and that I shall transfer the locality to that business establishment. But I am at present distracted with doubts and torn by remorse.

The schoolroom and dining-room I have brought into habitable condition and comfortable appearance. Charley and I breakfast at half-past eight, and meet again at dinner when he does not dine in the City, or has no engagement. He looks very well.

The audiences at Gye's are described to me as absolute marvels of coldness. No signs of emotion can be hammered out of them. Panizzi sat next me at the Academy dinner, and took it very ill that I disparaged ——. The amateurs here are getting up another pantomime, but quarrel so violently among themselves that I doubt its ever getting on the stage. Webster expounded his scheme for rebuilding the Adelphi to Stanfield and myself last night, and I felt bound to tell him that I thought it wrong from beginning to end. This is all the theatrical news I know.

I write by this post to Georgy. Love to Mamey, Katey, Harry, and the noble Plorn. I should be glad to see him here.

Ever affectionately.

CCXCIV. MISS HOGARTH

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, May 5, 1856.

MY DEAR GEORGY, — You will not be much surprised to hear that I have done nothing yet (except for "H. W."), and have only just settled down into a corner of the schoolroom. The extent to which John and I wallowed in dust for four hours yesterday morning, getting things neat and comfortable about us, you may faintly imagine. At four in the afternoon came Stanfield, to whom I no sooner described the notion of the new play than he immediately upset all my new arrangements by making a proscenium of the chairs, and planning the scenery with walking-sticks. One of the least things he did was getting on the top of the long table, and hanging over the bar in the middle window where that top sash opens, as if he had got a hinge in the middle of his body. He is immensely excited on the subject. Mark had a farce ready for the managerial perusal, but it won't do.

I went to the Dover theatre on Friday night, which was a

There is a painful picture of a great deal of merit (Egg has bought it) in the exhibition, painted by the man who did those little interiors of Forster's. It is called "The Death of Chatterton." The dead figure is a good deal like Arthur Stone; and I was touched on Saturday to see that tender old file standing before it, crying under his spectacles at the idea of seeing his son dead. It was a very tender manifestation of his gentle old heart.

This sums up my news, which is no news at all. Kiss the Plorn for me, and expound to him that I am always looking forward to meeting him again, among the birds and flowers in the garden on the side of the hill at Boulogne.

Ever affectionately.

CCXCV. MR. T. ROSS. MR. J. KENNY

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, 19th May, 1856.

GENTLEMEN, — I have received a letter signed by you (which I assume to be written mainly on behalf of what are called working men and their families) inviting me to attend a meeting in our Parish Vestry Hall this evening on the subject of the stoppage of the Sunday bands in the Parks.

I thoroughly agree with you that those bands have afforded an innocent and healthful enjoyment on the Sunday afternoon, to which the people have a right. But I think it essential that the working people should, of themselves and by themselves, assert that right. They have been informed, on the high authority of their first Minister (lately rather in want of House of Commons votes, I am told), that they are almost indifferent to it. The correction of that mistake, if official omniscience can be mistaken, lies with themselves. In case it should be considered by the meeting, which I prefer for this reason not to attend, expedient to unite with other Metropolitan parishes in forming a fund for the payment of such expenses as may be incurred in peaceably and numerously representing to the governing powers that the harmless recreation they have taken away is very much wanted, I beg you to put down my name as a subscriber of ten pounds.

And I am, your faithful servant.

CCXCVI. THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday, June 1, 1856.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, — Allow me to thank you with all my heart for your kind remembrance of me on Thursday night. My house was already engaged to Miss Coutts's, and I to — the top of St. Paul's, where the sight was most wonderful! But seeing that your cards gave me leave to present some person not named, I conferred them on my excellent friend Dr. Elliotson, whom I found with some fireworkless little boys in a desolate condition, and raised to the seventh heaven of happiness. You are so fond of making people happy, that I am sure you approve.

Always your faithful and much obliged.

CCXCVII. WILKIE COLLINS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, June 6, 1856.

MY DEAR COLLINS, — I have never seen anything about myself in print which has much correctness in it, and his

culation, I was engaged there, and that I remained there until I had begun to publish "Pickwick," when I found myself in a condition to relinquish that part of my labours; that I left the reputation behind me of being the best and most rapid reporter ever known, and that I could do anything in that way under any sort of circumstances, and often did. (I dare say I am at this present writing the best shorthand writer in the world.)

That I began, without any interest or introduction of any kind, to write fugitive pieces for the old "Monthly Magazine," when I was in the gallery for "The Mirror of Parliament;" that my faculty for descriptive writing was seized upon the moment I joined "The Morning Chronicle," and that I was liberally paid there and handsomely acknowledged, and wrote the greater part of the short descriptive "Sketches by Boz" in that paper; that I had been a writer when I was a mere baby, and always an actor from the same age; that I married the daughter of a writer to the signet in Edinburgh, who was the great friend and assistant of Scott, and who first made Lockhart known to him.

And that here I am.

Finally, if you want any dates of publication of books, tell Wills and he 'll get them for you.

This is the first time I ever set down even these particulars, and, glancing over them, I feel like a wild beast in a caravan describing himself in the keeper's absence.

Ever faithfully.

P. S. — I made a speech last night at the London Tavern, at the end of which all the company sat holding their napkins to their eyes with one hand, and putting the other into their pockets. A hundred people or so contributed nine hundred pounds then and there.

CCXCVIII. MARK LEMON

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Sunday, June 15, 1856.

MY DEAR OLD BOY, — This place is beautiful — a burst of roses. Your friend Beaucourt (who *will not* put on his hat) has thinned the *trees and greatly* improved the garden. Upon *my life, I believe there are* at least twenty distinct smoking-*spots expressly made in it.*

And as soon as you can see your day in next month for coming over with Stanny and Webster, will you let them both know? I should not be very much surprised if I were to come over and fetch you, when I know what your day is. Indeed, I don't see how you can get across properly without me.

There is a fête here to-night in honour of the Imperial baptism, and there will be another to-morrow. The Plorn has put on two bits of ribbon (one pink and one blue), which he calls "companys," to celebrate the occasion. The fact that the receipts of the fêtes are to be given to the sufferers of the late floods reminds me that you will find at the passport-office a tin box, condescendingly and considerately labelled in English: —

FOR THE OVERFLOWINGS,

which the chief officer clearly believes to mean, for the sufferers from the inundations.

I observe more Mingles in the laundresses' shops, and one inscription, which looks like the name of a duet or chorus in a playbill, "Here they mingle."

Will you congratulate Mrs. Lemon, with our loves, on her gallant victory over the recreant cabman?

Walter has turned up, rather brilliant on the whole; and that (with shoals of remembrances and messages which I don't deliver) is all my present intelligence.

Ever affectionately.

CCXCIX. MARK LEMON

"H. W." Office, July 2, 1856.

My dear Mark, — I am concerned to hear that you are ill, that you sit down before fires and shiver, and that you have stated times for doing so, like the demons in the melodramas, and that you mean to take a week to get well in.

Make haste about it, like a dear fellow, and keep up your spirits, because I have made a bargain with Stanny and Webster that they shall come to Boulogne to-morrow week, Thursday the 10th, and stay a week. And you know how much pleasure we shall all miss if you are not among us — at least for some part of the time.

If you find any unusually light appearance in the air at Brighton, it is a distant refraction (I have no doubt) of the gorgeous and shining surface of Tavistock House, now transcendently painted. The theatre partition is put up, and is a work of such terrific solidity, that I suppose it will be dug up, ages hence, from the ruins of London, by that Australian of Macaulay's who is to be impressed by its ashes. I have wandered through the spectral halls of the Tavistock mansion two nights, with feelings of the profoundest depression. I have breakfasted there, like a criminal in Pentonville (only not so well). It is more like Westminster Abbey by midnight than the lowest-spirited man — say you, at present, for example — can well imagine.

There has been a wonderful robbery at Folkestone, by the new manager of the Pavilion, who succeeded Giovannini. He had in keeping £16,000 of a foreigner's, and bolted with it, as he supposed, but in reality with only £1,400 of it. The Frenchman had previously bolted with the whole, which was the property of his mother. With him to England the Frenchman brought a "lady," who was, all the time and at the same time, endeavouring to steal all the money from him and bolt with it herself. The details are amazing, and all the money (a few pounds excepted) has been got back.

They will be full of sympathy and talk about you when I get home, and I shall tell them that I send their loves beforehand. They are all inclosed. The moment you feel hearty, just write me that word by post. I shall be so delighted to receive it.

Ever, my dear boy, your affectionate friend.

CCC. WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Villa des Moulineaux, Boulogne,
Saturday Evening, July 5, 1856.

My dear Landor, — I write to you so often in my books, and my writing of letters is usually so confined to the numbers that I *must* write, and in which I have no kind of satisfaction, that I am afraid to think how long it is since we exchanged a direct letter. But talking to your namesake this very day at dinner, it *suddenly entered my head* that I would come into *my room here as soon as dinner* should be over, and write, *"My dear Landor, how are you?"* for the pleasure of having

the answer under your own hand. That you *do* write, and that pretty often, I know beforehand. Else why do I read "The Examiner"?

We were in Paris from October to May (I perpetually flying between that city and London), and there we found out, by a blessed accident, that your godson was horribly deaf. I immediately consulted the principal physician of the Deaf and Dumb Institution there (one of the best aurists in Europe), and he kept the boy for three months, and took unheard-of pains with him. He is now quite recovered, has done extremely well at school, has brought home a prize in triumph, and will be eligible to "go up" for his India examination soon after next Easter. Having a direct appointment, he will probably be sent out soon after he has passed, and so will fall into that strange life "up the country," before he well knows he is alive, which indeed seems to be rather an advanced stage of knowledge.

And there in Paris, at the same time, I found Marguerite Power and Little Nelly, living with their mother and a pretty sister, in a very small, neat apartment, and working (as Marguerite told me) hard for a living. All that I saw of them

effect on me and every one, and the admiration thereof, grows on me the more I observe this curious fact.

Kate and Georgina send you their kindest loves, and smile approvingly on me from the next room, as I bend over my desk. My dear Landor, you see many, I dare say, and hear from many, I have no doubt, who love you heartily; but we silent people in the distance never forget you. Do not forget us, and let us exchange affection at least.

Ever your admirer and friend.

CCCI. THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, NEAR BOULOGNE,
Saturday Night, July 5, 1856.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, — From this place where I am writing my way through the summer, in the midst of rosy gardens and sea airs, I cannot forbear writing to tell you with what uncommon pleasure I received your interesting letter, and how sensible I always am of your kindness and generosity. You were always in the mind of my household during your illness; and to have so beautiful, and fresh, and manly an assurance of your recovery from it, under your own hand, is a privilege and delight that I will say no more of.

I am so glad you like Flora. It came into my head one day that we have all had our Floras, and that it was a half-serious, half-ridiculous truth which had never been told. It is a wonderful gratification to me to find that everybody knows her. Indeed, some people seem to think I have done them a personal injury, and that their individual Floras (God knows where they are, or who!) are each and all Little Dorrits.

We were all grievously disappointed that you were ill when we played Mr. Collins's "Lighthouse" at my house. If you had been well, I should have waited upon you with my humble petition that you would come and see it; and if you had come I think you would have cried, which would have charmed me. I hope to produce another play at home next Christmas, and if I can only persuade you to see it from a special arm-chair, and can only make you wretched, my satisfaction will be intense. May I tell you, to beguile a *moment*, of a little "Tag," or end of a *piece, I saw in Paris this last* winter, which struck me *as the prettiest I had ever met* with? The piece was not a

new one, but a revival at the Vaudeville — "Les Mémoires du Diable." Admirably constructed, very interesting, and extremely well played. The plot is, that a certain M. Robin has come into possession of the papers of a deceased lawyer, and finds some relating to the wrongful withholding of an estate from a certain baroness, and to certain other frauds (involving even the denial of the marriage to the deceased baron, and the tarnishing of his good name) which are so very wicked that he binds them up in a book and labels them "Mémoires du Diable." Armed with this knowledge he goes down to the desolate old château in the country — part of the wrested-away estate — from which the baroness and her daughter are going to be ejected. He informs the mother that he can right her and restore the property, but must have, as his reward, her daughter's hand in marriage. She replies: "I cannot promise my daughter to a man of whom I know nothing. The gain would be an unspeakable happiness, but I resolutely decline the bargain." The daughter, however, has observed all, and she comes forward and says: "Do what you have promised my mother you can do, and I am yours." Then the piece goes on to its development in an admirable way through the unmask-

made a necessary bargain with you; I release you from it. I have done what I undertook to do. I wish you and your amiable daughter all happiness. Adieu! I take my leave." Bows himself out. People on the stage astonished. Audience astonished — incensed. The daughter is going to cry, when she looks at the box on the table, remembers the bell, runs to it and rings it, and he rushes back and takes her to his heart; upon which we all cry with pleasure, and then laugh heartily.

This looks dreadfully long, and perhaps you know it already. If so, I will endeavour to make amends with Flora in future numbers.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister beg to present their remembrances to your Grace, and their congratulations on your recovery. I saw Paxton now and then when you were ill, and always received from him most encouraging accounts. I don't know how heavy he is going to be (I mean in the scale), but I begin to think Daniel Lambert must have been in his family.

Ever your Grace's faithful and obliged.

CCCII. WASHINGTON IRVING

Tavistock House, London, July 5, 1856.

My dear Irving, — If you knew how often I write to you individually and personally in my books, you would be no more surprised in seeing this note than you were in seeing me do my duty by that flowery julep (in what I dreamily apprehend to have been a former state of existence) at Baltimore.

Will you let me present to you a cousin of mine, Mr. B——, who is associated with a merchant's house in New York? Of course he wants to see you, and know you. How can *I* wonder at that? How can anybody?

I had a long talk with Leslie at the last Academy dinner (having previously been with him in Paris), and he told me that you were flourishing. I suppose you know that he wears a moustache — so do I for the matter of that, and a beard too — and that he looks like a portrait of Don Quixote.

Holland House has four-and-twenty youthful pages in it now — twelve for my lord, and twelve for my lady; and no clergyman coils his leg up under his chair all dinner-time, and begins to uncurve it when the hostess goes. No wheeled chair runs

smoothly in with that beaming face in it; and ——'s little cotton pocket-handkerchief helped to make (I believe) this very sheet of paper. A half-sad, half-ludicrous story of Rogers is all I will sully it with. You know, I dare say, that for a year or so before his death he wandered, and lost himself like one of the Children in the Wood, grown up there and grown down again. He had Mrs. Procter and Mrs. Carlyle to breakfast with him one morning — only those two. Both excessively talkative, very quick and clever, and bent on entertaining him. When Mrs. Carlyle had flashed and shone before him for about three quarters of an hour on one subject, he turned his poor old eyes on Mrs. Procter, and pointing to the brilliant discourser with his poor old finger, said (indignantly), "Who is *she?*" Upon this, Mrs. Procter, cutting in, delivered (it is her own story) a neat oration on the life and writings of Carlyle, and enlightened him in her happiest and airiest manner; all of which he heard, staring in the dreariest silence, and then said (indignantly, as before), "And who are *you?*"

Ever, my dear Irving,

Most affectionately and truly yours.

you! This is as pretty and odd a little French country-house as could be found anywhere; and the gardens are most beautiful.

In "Household Words," next week, pray read "The Diary of Anne Rodway" (in two not long parts). It is by Collins, and I think possesses great merit and real pathos.

Being in town the other day, I saw Gye by accident, and told him, when he praised —— to me, that she was a very bad actress. "Well!" said he, "*you* may say anything, but if anybody else had told me that I should have stared." Nevertheless, I derived an impression from his manner that she had not been a profitable speculation in respect of money. That very same day Stanfield and I dined alone together at the Garrick, and drank your health. We had had a ride by the river before dinner (of course he *would* go and look at boats), and had been talking of you. It was this day week, by the bye.

I know of nothing of public interest that is new in France, except that I am changing my moustache into a beard. We all send our most tender loves to dearest Miss Macready and all the house. The Hammy boy is particularly anxious to have his love sent to "Misr Creedy."

Ever, my dearest Macready,
Most affectionately yours.

CCCIV. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Wednesday, 9th July, 1856.

MY DEAR STONE, — I have got a capital part for you in the farce, not a difficult one to learn, as you never say anything but "Yes" and "No." You are called in the *dramatis personæ* an able-bodied British seaman, and you are never seen by mortal eye to do anything (except inopportunely producing a mop) but stand about the deck of the boat in everybody's way, with your hair immensely touzled, one brace on, your hands in your pockets, and the bottoms of your trousers tucked up. Yet you are inextricably connected with the plot, and are the man whom everybody is inquiring after. I think it is a very whimsical idea and extremely droll. It made me laugh heartily when I jotted it all down *yesterday*.

Loves from all my house to all yours.

Ever affectionately.

CCCV. WILKIE COLLINS

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Sunday, July 13, 1856.

MY DEAR COLLINS, — We are all sorry that you are not coming until the middle of next month, but we hope that you will then be able to remain, so that we may all come back together about the 10th of October. I think (recreation allowed, etc.) that the play will take that time to write. The ladies of the *dram. pers.* are frightfully anxious to get it under way, and to see you locked up in the pavilion; apropos of which noble edifice I have omitted to mention that it is made a more secluded retreat than it used to be, and is greatly improved by the position of the door being changed. It is as snug and as pleasant as possible; and the Genius of Order has made a few little improvements about the house (at the rate of about tenpence apiece), which the Genius of Disorder will, it is hoped, appreciate.

I think I must come over for a small spree, and to fetch you.

week I sketched out the notion, characters, and progress of the farce and sent it off to Mark, who has been ill of an ague. It ought to be very funny. The cat business is too ludicrous to be treated of in so small a sheet of paper, so I must describe it *vivâ voce* when I come to town. French has been so insufferably conceited since he shot tigerish cat No. 1 (intent on the noble Dick, with green eyes three inches in advance of her head), that I am afraid I shall have to part with him. All the boys likewise (in new clothes and ready for church) are at this instant prone on their stomachs behind bushes, whooshing and crying (after tigerish cat No. 2): "French!" "Here she comes!" "There she goes!" etc. I dare not put my head out of window for fear of being shot (it is as like a *coup d'état* as possible), and tradesmen coming up the avenue cry plaintively: "Ne tirez pas, Monsieur Fleench; c'est moi — boulanger. Ne tirez pas, mon ami."

Likewise I shall have to recount to you the secret history of a robbery at the Pavilion at Folkestone, which you will have to write.

Tell Piggot, when you see him, that we shall all be much pleased if he will come at his own convenience while you are here, and stay a few days with us.

I shall have more than one notion of future work to suggest to you while we are beguiling the dreariness of an arctic winter in these parts. May they prosper!

Kind regards from all to the Dramatic Poet of the establishment, and to the D. P.'s mother and brother.

Ever yours.

P. S. — If the "Flying Dutchman" should be done again, pray do go and see it. Webster expressed his opinion to me that it was "a neat piece." I implore you to go and see a neat piece.

CCCVI. W. H. WILLS

Boulogne, Thursday, August 7, 1856.

My dear Wills, — I do not feel disposed to record those two Chancery *cases; firstly*, because I would rather have no *part in engendering, in the mind* of any human creature, a hopeful *confidence in that den of iniquity*.

And secondly, because it seems to me that the real philosophy of the facts is altogether missed in the narrative. The wrong which chanced to be set right in these two cases was done, as all such wrong is, mainly because these wicked courts of equity, with all their means of evasion and postponement, give scoundrels confidence in cheating. If justice were cheap, sure, and speedy, few such things could be. It is because it has become (through the vile dealing of those courts and the vermin they have called into existence) a positive precept of experience that a man had better endure a great wrong than go, or suffer himself to be taken, into Chancery, with the dream of setting it right. It is because of this that such nefarious speculations are made.

Therefore I see nothing at all to the credit of Chancery in these cases, but everything to its discredit. And as to owing it to Chancery to bear testimony to its having rendered justice in two such plain matters, I have no debt of the kind upon my conscience. In haste, ever faithfully.

CCCVII. W. C. MACREADY

Being in town last Saturday, I went to see Robson in a burlesque of "Medea." It is an odd but perfectly true testimony to the extraordinary power of his performance (which is of a very remarkable kind indeed), that it points the badness of ——'s acting in a most singular manner, by bringing out what she might do and does not. The scene with Jason is perfectly terrific; and the manner in which the comic rage and jealousy does not pitch itself over the floor at the stalls is in striking contrast to the manner in which the tragic rage and jealousy does. He has a frantic song and dagger-dance, about ten minutes long altogether, which has more passion in it than —— could express in fifty years.

We all unite in kindest love to Miss Macready and all your dear ones; not forgetting my godson, to whom I send his godfather's particular love twice over. The Hammy boy is so brown that you would scarcely know him.

Ever, my dear Macready, affectionately yours.

CCCVIII. W. H. WILLS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday Morning,
September 28, 1856.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I suddenly remember this morning that in Mr. Curtis's article, "Health and Education," I left a line which must come out. It is in effect that the want of healthy training leaves girls in a fit state to be the subjects of mesmerism. I would not on any condition hurt Elliotson's feelings (as I should deeply) by leaving that depreciatory kind of reference in any page of "H. W." He has suffered quite enough without a stab from a friend. So pray, whatever the inconvenience may be in what Bradbury calls "the Friars," take that passage out. By some extraordinary accident, after observing it, I forgot to do it.

Ever faithfully.

CCCIX. MISS DICKENS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Saturday, October 4, 1856.

MY DEAR MAMEY, — *The* preparations for the play are *already beginning, and it is* christened (this is a great dramatic *secret, which I suppose you know* already) "The Frozen Deep."

Tell Katey, with my best love, that if she fail to come back six times as red, hungry, and strong as she was when she went away, I shall give her part to somebody else.

We shall all be very glad to see you both back again; when I say "we" I include the birds (who send their respectful duty) and the Plorn.

Kind regards to all at Brighton.

Ever, my dear Mamey, your affectionate father.

CCCX. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Tuesday, October 7, 1856.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — I *did* write it for you; and I hoped in writing it, that you would think so. All those remembrances are fresh in my mind, as they often are, and gave me an extraordinary interest in recalling the past. I should have been grievously disappointed if you had not been pleased, for I took aim at you with a most determined intention.

Let me congratulate you most heartily on your handsome Eddy having passed his examination with such credit. I am

and already the schoolroom is in the hands of carpenters; men from underground habitations in theatres, who look as if they lived entirely upon smoke and gas, meet me at unheard-of hours. Mr. Stanfield is perpetually measuring the boards with a chalked piece of string and an umbrella, and all the elder children are wildly punctual and businesslike to attract managerial commendation. If you don't come, I shall do something antagonistic — try to unwrite No. 11, I think. I should particularly like you to see a new and serious piece so done. Because I don't think you know, without seeing, how good it is!!!

None of the children suffered, thank God, from the Boulogne risk. The three little boys have gone back to school there, and are all well. Katey came away ill, but it turned out that she had the whooping-cough for the second time. She has been to Brighton, and comes home to-day. I hear great accounts of her and hope to find her quite well when she arrives presently. I am afraid Mary Boyle has been praising the Boulogne life too highly. Not that I deny, however, our having passed some very pleasant days together, and our having had great pleasure in her visit.

You will object to me dreadfully, I know, with a beard (though not a great one), but if you come and see the play, you will find it necessary there, and will perhaps be more tolerant of the fearful object afterwards. I need not tell you how delighted we should be to see George, if you would come together. Pray tell him so, with my kind regards. I like the notion of Wentworth and his philosophy of all things. I remember a philosophical gravity upon him, a state of suspended opinion as to myself, it struck me, when we last met, in which I thought there was a great deal of oddity and character.

Charley is doing very well at Baring's, and attracting praise and reward to himself. Within this fortnight there turned up from the West Indies, where he is now a chief justice, an old friend of mine, of my own age, who lived with me in lodgings in the Adelphi, when I was just Charley's age. He had a great affection for me at that time, and always supposed I was to do some sort of wonders. It was a very pleasant meeting indeed, and he seemed to think it so odd that I should n't be Charley!

This is every atom of no-news that will come out of my head, *and I firmly believe it is* all I have in it — except that a

cobbler at Boulogne, who had the nicest of little dogs, that always sat in his sunny window watching him at work, asked me if I would bring the dog home, as he could n't afford to pay the tax for him. The cobbler and the dog being both my particular friends, I complied. The cobbler parted with the dog heart-broken. When the dog got home here, my man, like an idiot as he is, tied him up and then untied him. The moment the gate was open, the dog (on the very day after his arrival) ran out. Next day, Georgy and I saw him lying, all covered with mud, dead, outside the neighbouring church. How am I ever to tell the cobbler? He is too poor to come to England, so I feel that I must lie to him for life, and say that the dog is fat and happy. Mr. Plornish, much affected by this tragedy, said: "I s'pose, pa, I shall meet the cobbler's dog" (in heaven).

Georgy and Catherine send their best love, and I send mine. Pray write to me again some day, and I can't be too busy to be happy in the sight of your familiar hand, associated in my mind with so much that I love and honour.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson, most faithfully yours.

Are these the tones —
Volumnia Jones ?

No. Again it seems doubtful.

God bless her bones,
Petronia Jones !

I think not.

Carve I on stones
Olympia Jones ?

Can *that* be the name ? Fond memory favours it more than any other. My love to her.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Horne, very faithfully yours.

CCCXII. THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, December 1, 1856.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, — The moment the first bill is printed for the first night of the new play I told you of, I send it to you, in the hope that you will grace it with your presence. There is not one of the old actors whom you will fail to inspire as no one else can; and I hope you will see a little result of a friendly union of the arts, that you may think worth seeing, and that you can see nowhere else.

We propose repeating it on Thursday, the 8th; Monday, the 12th; and Wednesday, the 14th of January. I do not incumber this note with so many bills, and merely mention those nights in case any one of them should be more convenient to you than the first.

But I shall hope for the first, unless you dash me (N. B. — I put Flora into the current number on purpose that this might catch you softened towards me, and at a disadvantage). If there is hope of your coming, I will have the play clearly copied, and will send it to you to read beforehand. With the most grateful remembrances, and the sincerest good wishes for your health and happiness,

I am ever, my dear Duke of Devonshire,

Your faithful and obliged.

CCCXIII. THOMAS MITTON

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Wednesday, December 3, 1856.

MY DEAR MITTON, — The inspector from the fire-office — surveyor, by the bye, they called him — duly came. Wills described him as not very pleasant in his manners. I derived the impression that he was so exceedingly dry that if *he* ever takes fire, he must burn out, and can never otherwise be extinguished.

Next day, I received a letter from the secretary, to say that the said surveyor had reported great additional risk from fire, and that the directors, at their meeting next Tuesday, would settle the extra amount of premium to be paid.

Thereupon I thought the matter was becoming complicated, and wrote a common-sense note to the secretary (which I begged might be read to the directors), saying that I was quite prepared to pay any extra premium, but setting forth the plain state of the case. (I did not say that the Lord Chief Justice, the Chief Baron, and half the Bench were coming; though I felt a temp-

we shall be cordially glad to see him? I hope to intrust him with a special shake of the hand, to be forwarded to our dear boy (if a hoary sage like myself may venture on that expression) by the next mail.

I would have proposed the first night, but that is too full. You may faintly imagine, my venerable friend, the occupation of these also grey hairs, between "Golden Marys," "Little Dorrits," "Household Wordses," four stage-carpenters entirely boarding on the premises, a carpenter's shop erected in the back garden, size always boiling over on all the lower fires, Stanfield perpetually elevated on planks and splashing himself from head to foot, Telbin requiring impossibilities of smart gas-men, and a legion of prowling nondescripts for ever shrinking in and out. Calm amidst the wreck, your aged friend glides away on the "Dorrit" stream, forgetting the uproar for a stretch of hours, refreshes himself with a ten or twelve miles walk, pitches head-foremost into foaming rehearsals, placidly emerges for editorial purposes, smokes over buckets of distemper with Mr. Stanfield aforesaid, again calmly floats upon the "Dorrit" waters.

With very best love to Miss Macready and all the rest,

Ever, my dear Macready, most affectionately yours.

CCCXV. MISS POWER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, December 15, 1856.

MY DEAR MARGUERITE,—I am not *quite* clear about the story; not because it is otherwise than exceedingly pretty, but because I am rather in a difficult position as to stories just now. Besides beginning a long one by Collins with the new year (which will last five or six months), I have, as I always have at this time, a considerable residue of stories written for the Christmas number, not suitable to it, and yet available for the general purposes of "Household Words." This limits my choice for the moment to stories that have some decided specialties (or a great deal of story) in them.

But I will look over the accumulation before you come, and I hope you will never see your little friend again but in print.

You will find us expecting you on the night of the twenty-fourth, and heartily glad to welcome you. The most terrific preparations are in hand for the play on Twelfth Night. There has been a carpenter's shop in the garden for six weeks; a

painter's shop in the schoolroom; a gas-fitter's shop all over the basement; a dressmaker's shop at the top of the house; a tailor's shop in my dressing-room. Stanfield has been incessantly on scaffoldings for two months; and your friend has been writing "Little Dorrit," etc., etc., in corners, like the sultan's groom, who was turned upside down by the genie.

Kindest love from all, and from me.

Ever affectionately.

CCCXVI. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Christmas Eve, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR, — I cannot leave your letter unanswered, because I am really anxious that you should understand why I cannot comply with your request.

Scarcely a week passes without my receiving requests from various quarters to sit for likenesses, to be taken by all the processes ever invented. Apart from my having an invincible objection to the multiplication of my countenance in the shop windows, I have not, between my avocations and my needful recreation, the time to comply with these proposals. At this moment there are three cases out of a vast number, in which I have said: "If I sit at all, it shall be to you first, to you second, and to you third." But I assure you, I consider myself almost as unlikely to go through these three conditional achievements as I am to go to China. Judge when I am likely to get to Mr. Watkins!

I highly esteem and thank you for your sympathy with my writings. I doubt if I have a more genial reader in the world.

Very faithfully yours.

CCCXVII. SIR JAMES EMERSON TENNENT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, January 9, 1857.

MY DEAR TENNENT, — I must thank you for your earnest and affectionate letter. It has given me the greatest pleasure, mixing the play in my mind confusedly and delightfully with Pisa, the Valetta, Naples, Herculanæum — God knows what not.

As to the play itself; when it is made as good as my care can make it, I derive a strange feeling out of it, like writing a book in company; a satisfaction of a most singular kind, which

has no exact parallel in my life; a something that I suppose to belong to the life of a labourer in art alone, and which has to me a conviction of its being actual truth without its pain, that I never could adequately state if I were to try never so hard.

You touch so kindly and feelingly on the pleasure such little pains give, that I feel quite sorry you have never seen this drama in progress during the last ten weeks here. Every Monday and Friday evening during that time we have been at work upon it. I assure you it has been a remarkable lesson to my young people in patience, perseverance, punctuality, and order; and, best of all, in that kind of humility which is got from the earned knowledge that whatever the right hand finds to do must be done with the heart in it, and in a desperate earnest.

When I changed my dress last night (though I did it very quickly), I was vexed to find you gone. I wanted to have secured you for our greenroom supper, which was very pleasant. If by any accident you should be free next Wednesday night (our last), pray come to that greenroom supper. It would give me cordial pleasure to have you there.

Ever, my dear Tennent, very heartily yours.

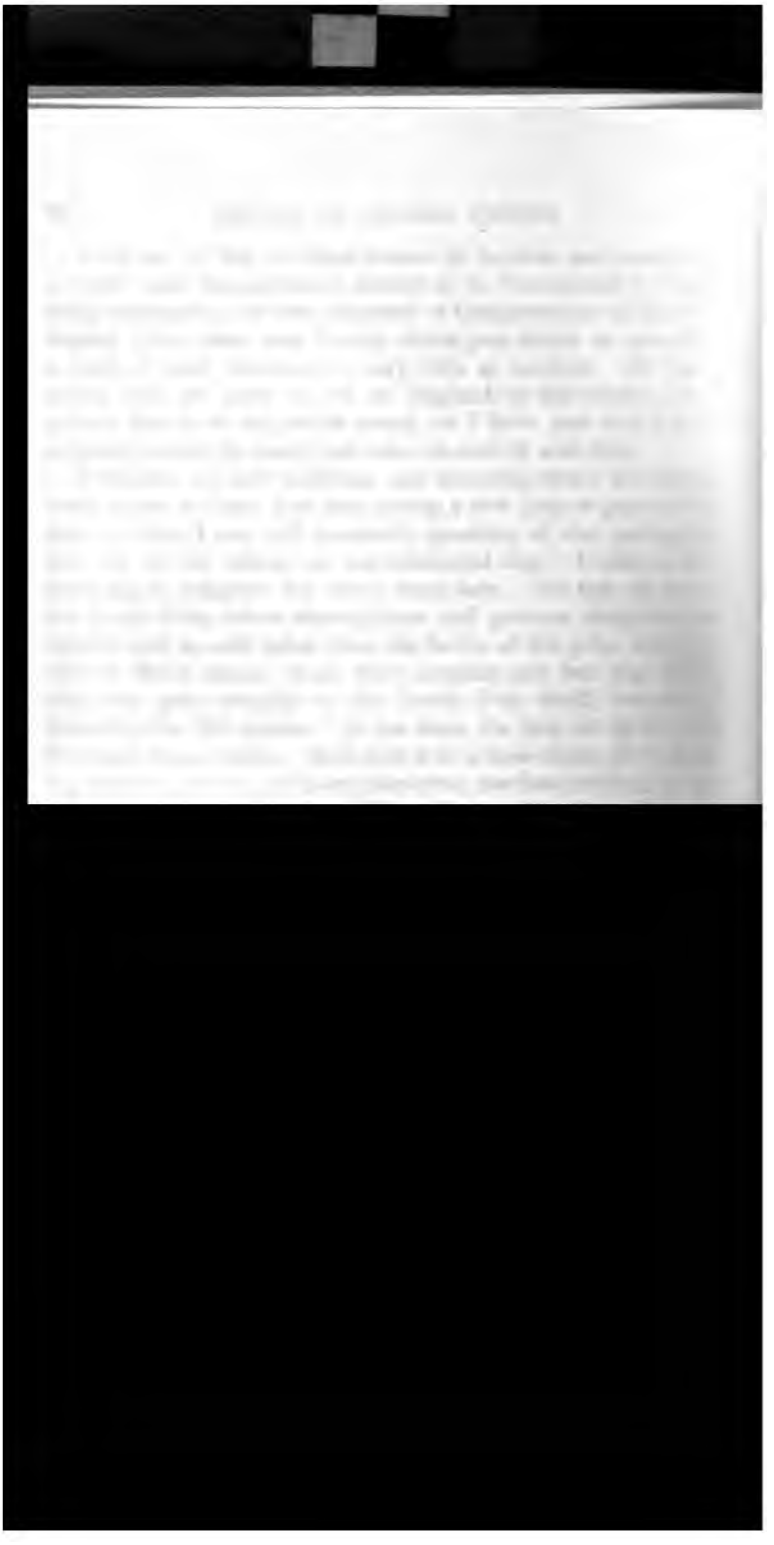
CCCXVIII. M. DE CERJAT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday Night,
January 17, 1857.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — So wonderfully do good (epistolary) intentions become confounded with bad execution, that I assure you I laboured under a perfect and most comfortable conviction that I had answered your Christmas Eve letter of 1855. More than that, in spite of your assertions to the contrary, I still strenuously believe that I did so! I have more than half a mind ("Little Dorrit" and my other occupations notwithstanding) to charge you with having forgotten my reply!! I have even a wild idea that Townshend reproached me, when the last old year was new, with writing to you instead of to him!!! We will argue it out, as well as we can argue anything without poor dear Haldimand, when I come back to Elysée. In any case, however, *don't discontinue your annual letter, because it has become an expected and a delightful part of the season to me.*

With one of the prettiest houses in London, and every conivable (and inconceivable) luxury in it, Townshend is volunrily undergoing his own sentence of transportation in Nervi, a astly little place near Genoa, where you would as soon find herd of wild elephants in any villa as comfort. He has a tion that he *must* be out of England in the winter, but I lieve him to be altogether wrong (as I have just told him in etter), unless he could just take his society with him.

Workmen are now battering and smashing down my theatre re, where we have just been acting a new play of great merit, ne in what I may call (modestly speaking of the getting-up, d not of the acting) an unprecedented way. I believe that ything so complete has never been seen. We had an act at e North Pole, where the slightest and greatest thing the eye held were equally taken from the books of the polar voyagers. t of thirty people, there were certainly not two who might t have gone straight to the North Pole itself, completely rnished for the winter! It has been the talk of all London r these three weeks. And now it is a mere chaos of scaffold-g, ladders, beams, canvases, paint-pots, sawdust, artificial snow,



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The lady I had allotted to me to take down to dinner yesterday began to speak of that neighbourbood. 'You know it?' I said; 'I have been there to-day.' 'O yes,' said she, 'I know it very well. I was a child there, in the house they call Gad's Hill Place. My father was the rector, and lived there many years. He has just died, has left it to me, and I want to sell it.' 'So,' says the sub-editor, 'you must buy it. Now or never!'" I did, and hope to pass next summer there, though I may, perhaps, let it afterwards, furnished, from time to time.

All about myself I find, and the little sheet nearly full! But I know, my dear Cerjat, the subject will have its interest for you, so I give it its swing. Mrs. Watson was to have been at the play, but most unfortunately had three children sick of gastric fever, and could not leave them. She was here some three weeks before, looking extremely well in the face, but rather thin. I have not heard of your friend Mr. Percival Skelton, but I much misdoubt an amateur artist's success in this vast place. I hope you detected a remembrance of our happy visit to the Great St. Bernard in a certain number of "Little Dorrit"? Tell Mrs. Cerjat, with my love, that the opinions I have expressed to her on the subject of cows have become matured in my mind by experience and venerable age; and that I denounce the race as humbugs, who have been getting into poetry and all sorts of places without the smallest reason. Haldimand's housekeeper is an awful woman to consider. Pray give him our kindest regards and remembrances, if you ever find him in a mood to take it. "Our" means Mrs. Dickens's, Georgie's, and mine. We often, often talk of our old days at Lausanne, and send loving regards to Mrs. Cerjat and all your house.

Adieu, my dear fellow; ever cordially yours.

CCCXIX. SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Wednesday, January 28, 1857.

MY DEAR BULWER, — I thought Wills had told you as to the Guild (for I begged him to) that he can do absolutely nothing until our charter is seven years old. It is the stringent and express *prohibition of the Act* of Parliament — for which *things you members, thank God,* are responsible, and not I. *When I observed this clause* (which was just as we were going

to grant a pension, if we could agree on a good subject), I caused our counsel's opinion to be taken on it, and there is not a doubt about it. I immediately recommended that there should be no expenses — that the interest on the capital should be all invested as it accrued — that the chambers should be given up and the clerk discharged — and that the Guild should have the use of the "Household Words" office rent free, and the services of Wills on the same terms. All of which was done.

A letter is now copying, to be sent round to all the members, explaining, with the New Year, the whole state of the thing. You will receive this. It appears to me that it looks wholesome enough. But if a strong idiot comes and binds your hands, or mine, or both, for seven years, what is to be done against him?

As to greater matters than this, however, — as to all matters on this teeming Earth, — it appears to me that the House of Commons and Parliament altogether is just the dreariest failure and nuisance that has bothered this much-bothered world.

Ever yours.

with it on any consideration. I will never get such a wooden head again. Ever affectionately.

CCCXXI. MISS MARY BOYLE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, February 7, 1857.

MY DEAR MARY, — Half a dozen words on this, my birthday, to thank you for your kind and welcome remembrance, and to assure you that your Joseph is proud of it.

For about ten minutes after his death, on each occasion of that event occurring, Richard Wardour was in a floored condition. And one night, to the great terror of Devonshire, the Arctic Regions, and Newfoundland (all of which localities were afraid to speak to him, as his ghost sat by the kitchen fire in its rags), he very nearly did what he never did, went and fainted off, dead, again. But he always plucked up, on the turn of ten minutes, and became facetious.

Likewise he chipped great pieces out of all his limbs (solely, as I imagine, from moral earnestness and concussion of passion, for I never knew him to hit himself in any way) and terrified Aldersley [1] to that degree, by lunging at him to carry him into the cave, that the said Aldersley always shook like a mould of jelly, and muttered, "By G—, this is an awful thing!"

Ever affectionately.

P. S. — I shall never cease to regret Mrs. Watson's not having been there.

CCCXXII. REV. JAMES WHITE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday, February 8, 1857.

MY DEAR WHITE, — I send these lines by Mary and Katey, to report my love to all.

Your note about the Golden Mary gave me great pleasure; though I don't believe in one part of it; for I honestly believe that your story, as really belonging to the rest of the narrative, had been generally separated from the other stories, and greatly liked. I had not that particular shipwreck that you mention in my mind (*indeed I doubt if I know it*), and John Steadiman *merely came into my head as a stanch sort of name that suited*

[1] *The part played in The Frozen Deep* by its author, Mr. Wilkie Collins.

the character. The number has done "Household Words" great service, and has decidedly told upon its circulation.

You should have come to the play. I much doubt if anything so complete will ever be seen again. An incredible amount of pains and ingenuity was expended on it, and the result was most remarkable even to me.

When are you going to send something more to "H. W." ? Are you lazy ? ? Low-spirited ? ? ? Pining for Paris ? ? ? ?

Ever affectionately.

CCCXXIII. MISS EMILY JOLLY

GRAVESEND, KENT, 10th April, 1857.

DEAR MADAM, — As I am away from London for a few days, your letter has been forwarded to me.

I can honestly encourage and assure you that I believe the depression and want of confidence under which you describe yourself as labouring to have no sufficient foundation.

First as to "Mr. Arle." I have constantly heard it spoken of with great approval, and I think it a book of considerable

"Household Words." If you should do so, I assure you I shall be happy to read it myself, and that I shall have a sincere desire to accept it if possible.

I can give you no better counsel than to look into the life about you, and to strive for what is noblest and true. As to further encouragement, I do not, I can most strongly add, believe that you have any reason to be downhearted.

Very faithfully yours.

CCCXXIV. THE EARL OF CARLISLE

GRAVESEND, KENT, Wednesday, April 15, 1857.

MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE, — I am writing by the riverside for a few days, and at the end of last week —— appeared here with your note of introduction. I was not in the way; but as —— had come express from London with it, Mrs. Dickens opened it, and gave her (in the limited sense which was of no use to her) an audience. She did not quite seem to know what she wanted of me. But she said she had understood at Stafford House that I had a theatre in which she could read; with a good deal of modesty and diffidence she at last got so far. Now, my little theatre turns my house out of window, costs fifty pounds to put up, and is only two months taken down; therefore, is quite out of the question. This Mrs. Dickens explained, and also my profound inability to do anything for —— readings which they could not do for themselves. She appeared fully to understand the explanation, and indeed to have anticipated for herself how powerless I must be in such a case.

She described herself as being consumptive, and as being subject to an effusion of blood from the lungs; about the last condition, one would think, poor woman, for the exercise of public elocution as an art.

Between ourselves, I think the whole idea a mistake, and have thought so from its first announcement. It has a fatal appearance of trading upon "Uncle Tom," and am I not a man and a brother? which you may be by all means, and still not have the smallest claim to my attention as a public reader. The town is overread from all the white squares on the draught-board; it has been considerably harried from all the black squares — now with the aid of old banjos, and now with the aid of Exeter Hall; and I have a very strong impression

that it is by no means to be laid hold of from this point of address. I myself, for example, am the meekest of men, and in abhorrence of slavery yield to no human creature, and yet I don't admit the sequence that I want "Uncle Tom" (or Aunt Tomasina) to expound "King Lear" to me. And I believe my case to be the case of thousands.

I trouble you with this much about it, because I am naturally desirous you should understand that if I could possibly have been of any service, or have suggested anything to this poor lady, I would not have lost the opportunity. But I cannot help her, and I assure you that I cannot honestly encourage her to hope. I fear her enterprise has no hope in it.

In your absence I have always followed you through the papers, and felt a personal interest and pleasure in the public affection in which you are held over there.[1] At the same time I must confess that I should prefer to have you here, where good public men seem to me to be dismally wanted. I have no sympathy with demagogues, but am a grievous Radical, and think the political signs of the times to be just about as bad as the spirit of the people will admit of their being. In all other

dinner. I have so many matters pressing on my attention, that I cannot turn to it immediately on my release from my book just finished. It shall be done and distributed early next month.

As to anything being lost by its not being in the hands of the people who dine (as you seem to think), I have not the least misgiving on that score. They would say, if it were issued, just what they will say without it.

Lord Granville is committed to taking the chair, and will make the best speech he can in it. The pious —— will cram him with as many distortions of the truth as his stomach may be strong enough to receive. ——, with Bardolphian eloquence, will cool his nose in the modest merits of the institution. —— will make a neat and appropriate speech on both sides, round the corner and over the way. And all this would be done exactly to the same purpose and in just the same strain, if twenty thousand copies of the pamphlet had been circulated.

Ever affectionately.

CCCXXVI. REV. JAMES WHITE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Friday, May 22, 1857.

MY DEAR WHITE, — My emancipation having been effected on Saturday, the ninth of this month, I take some shame to myself for not having sooner answered your note. But the host of things to be done as soon as I was free, and the tremendous number of ingenuities to be wrought out at Gad's Hill, have kept me in a whirl of their own ever since.

We purpose going to Gad's Hill for the summer on the 1st of June; as, apart from the master's eye being a necessary ornament to the spot, I clearly see that the workmen yet lingering in the yard must be squeezed out by bodily pressure, or they will never go. How will this suit you and yours? If you will come down, we can take you all in, on your way north; that is to say, we shall have that ample verge and room enough, until about the eighth; when Hans Christian Andersen (who has been "coming" for about three years) will come for a fortnight's stay in England. I shall like you to see the little old-fashioned place. It strikes me as being comfortable.

So let *me know your little game.* And with love to Mrs. *White, Lotty, and Clara,*

Believe me, ever affectionately yours.

CCCXXVII. MISS EMILY JOLLY

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Saturday Morning, May 30, 1857.

DEAR MADAM, — I read your story, with all possible attention, last night. I cannot tell you with what reluctance I write to you respecting it, for my opinion of it is *not* favourable, although I perceive your heart in it, and great strength.

Pray understand that I claim no infallibility. I merely express my own honest opinion, formed against my earnest desire. I do not lay it down as law for others, though, of course, I believe that many others would come to the same conclusion. It appears to me that the story is one that cannot possibly be told within the compass to which you have limited yourself. The three principal people are, every one of them, in the wrong with the reader, and you cannot put any of them right, without making the story extend over a longer space of time, and without anatomising the souls of the actors more slowly and carefully. Nothing would justify the departure of Alice but her having some strong reason to believe that, in

Lastly, I fear she is too convulsive from beginning to end. Pray reconsider, from this point of view, her brow and her eyes, and her drawing herself up to her full height, and her being a perfumed presence, and her floating into rooms, also her asking people how they dare, and the like, on small provocation. When she hears her music being played, I think she is particularly objectionable.

I have a strong belief that if you keep this story by you three or four years, you will form an opinion of it not greatly differing from mine. There is so much good in it, so much reflection, so much passion and earnestness, that, if my judgment be right, I feel sure you will come over to it. On the other hand, I do not think that its publication, as it stands, would do you service, or be agreeable to you hereafter.

I have no means of knowing whether you are patient in the pursuit of this art; but I am inclined to think that you are not, and that you do not discipline yourself enough. When one is impelled to write this or that, one has still to consider: "How much of this will tell for what I mean? How much of it is my own wild emotion and superfluous energy — how much remains that is truly belonging to this ideal character and these ideal circumstances?" It is in the laborious struggle to make this distinction, and in the determination to try for it, that the road to the correction of faults lies. (Perhaps I may remark, in support of the sincerity with which I write this, that I am an impatient and impulsive person myself, but that it has been for many years the constant effort of my life to practice at my desk what I preach to you.)

I should not have written so much, or so plainly, but for your last letter to me. It seems to demand that I should be strictly true with you, and I am so in this letter, without any reservation either way.

Very faithfully yours.

CCCXXVIII. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS,"
Monday, June 1, 1857.

MY DEAR STONE, — *I know that* what I am going to say *will not be agreeable; but I rely on* the authoress's good sense; *and say it, knowing it to be the truth.*

These "Notes" are destroyed by too much smartness. It gives the appearance of perpetual effort, stabs to the heart the nature that is in them, and wearies by the manner and not by the matter. It is the commonest fault in the world (as I have constant occasion to observe here), but it is a very great one. Just as you could n't bear to have an épergne or a candlestick on your table, supported by a light figure always on tiptoe and evidently in an impossible attitude for the sustainment of its weight, so all readers would be more or less oppressed and worried by this presentation of everything in one smart point of view, when they know it must have other, and weightier, and more solid properties. Airiness and good spirits are always delightful, and are inseparable from notes of a cheerful trip; but they should sympathise with many things as well as see them in a lively way. It is but a word or a touch that expresses this humanity, but without that little embellishment of good nature there is no such thing as humour. In this little MS. everything is too much patronised and condescended to, whereas the slightest touch of feeling for the rustic who is of the earth earthy, or of sisterhood with the homely servant who has made her fascinating in her desire to please, would

nicate anything of that pleasure to another by showing it from one little limited point only, and that point, observe, the one from which it is impossible to detach the exponent as the patroness of a whole universe of inferior souls. This is what everybody would mean in objecting to these notes (supposing them to be published), that they are too smart and too flippant.

As I understand this matter to be altogether between us three, and as I think your confidence, and hers, imposes a duty of friendship on me, I discharge it to the best of my ability. Perhaps I make more of it than you may have meant or expected; if so, it is because I am interested and wish to express it. If there had been anything in my objection not perfectly easy of removal, I might, after all, have hesitated to state it; but that is not the case. A very little indeed would make all this gaiety as sound and wholesome and good-natured in the reader's mind as it is in the writer's.

Affectionately always.

CCCXXIX. ANONYMOUS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM,
Thursday, June 4, 1857.

MY DEAR ——, — Coming home here last night, from a day's business in London, I found your most excellent note awaiting me, in which I have had a pleasure to be derived from none but good and natural things. I can now honestly assure you that I believe you will write *well*, and that I have a lively hope that I may be the means of showing you yourself in print one day. Your powers of graceful and light-hearted observation need nothing but the little touches on which we are both agreed. And I am perfectly sure that they will be as pleasant to you as to any one, for nobody can see so well as you do, without feeling kindly too.

To confess the truth to you, I was half sorry, yesterday, that I had been so unreserved; but not half as sorry, yesterday, as I am glad to-day. You must not mind my adding that there is a noble candour and modesty in your note, which I shall never be able to separate from you henceforth.

Affectionately yours always.

CCCXXX. HENRY AUSTIN

GAD'S HILL, Saturday, June 6, 1857.

MY DEAR HENRY, — Here is a very serious business on the great estate respecting the water supply. Last night they had pumped the well dry merely in raising the family supply for the day; and this morning (very little water having been got into the cisterns) it is dry again! It is pretty clear to me that we must look the thing in the face, and at once bore deeper, dig, or do some beastly thing or other, to secure this necessary in abundance. Meanwhile I am in a most plaintive and forlorn condition without your presence and counsel. I raise my voice in the wilderness and implore the same!!!

Wild legends are in circulation among the servants how that Captain Goldsmith on the knoll above — the skipper in that crow's-nest of a house — has millions of gallons of water always flowing for him. Can he have damaged my well? Can we imitate him, and have our millions of gallons? Goldsmith or I must fall, so I conceive.

together, and were there on a Sunday, he would give us the whole Exhibition to ourselves. It is probable, I think (as he estimates the receipts of a night at about seven hundred pounds), that we may, in about a fortnight or so after the reading, play "The Frozen Deep" at Manchester. But of this contingent engagement I at present know no more than you do.

Now, will you, upon this exposition of affairs, choose your own time for coming to us, and, when you have made your choice, write to me at Gad's Hill? I am going down this afternoon for rest (which means violent cricket with the boys) after last Saturday night; which was a teaser, but triumphant. The St. Martin's Hall audience was, I must confess, a very extraordinary thing. The two thousand and odd people were like one, and their enthusiasm was something awful.

Yet I have seen that before, too. Your young remembrance cannot recall the man; but he flourished in my day — a great actor, sir — a noble actor — thorough artist! I have seen him do wonders in that way. He retired from the stage early in life (having a monomaniacal delusion that he was old), and is said to be still living in your county.

All join in kindest love to your dear sister and all the rest.

Ever, my dearest Macready,

Most affectionately yours.

CCCXXXII. EDMUND YATES

Tavistock House, Sunday, July 19, 1857.

My dear Yates, — Although I date this ashore, I really write it from Southampton (don't notice this fact in your reply, for I shall be in town on Wednesday). I have come here on an errand which will grow familiar to you before you know that Time has flapped his wings over your head. Like me, you will find those babies grow to be young men before you are quite sure they are born. Like me, you will have great teeth drawn with a wrench, and will only then know that you ever cut them. I am here to send Walter away over what they call, in Green Bush melodramas, "the Big Drink," and I don't at all know this day how he comes to be mine, or I his.

I don't *write to say this — or to say* how seeing Charley and *he going aboard the ship before* me just now, I suddenly came *into possession of a photograph* of my own back at sixteen and

twenty, and also into a suspicion that I had doubled the last age. I merely write to mention that Telbin and his wife are going down to Gad's Hill with us, about midday next Sunday, and that if you and Mrs. Yates will come too, we shall be delighted to have you. We can give you a bed, and you can be in town (if you have such a savage necessity) by twenty minutes before ten on Monday morning.

I was very much pleased (as I had reason to be) with your account of the reading in "The Daily News." I thank you heartily.

CCCXXXIII. T. P. COOKE

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LATE MR. DOUGLAS JERROLD.

COMMITTEE'S OFFICE, GALLERY OF ILLUSTRATION,
REGENT STREET, Thursday, July 30, 1857.

MY DEAR MR. COOKE, — I cannot rest satisfied this morning without writing to congratulate you on your admirable performance of last night. It was so fresh and vigorous, so manly

We shall go down in the old pleasant way, and shall have the Art Treasures Exhibition to ourselves on the Sunday; when even "he" (as Rogers always called every pretty woman's husband) might come and join us.

What do you say? What does he say? and what does baby say? When I use the term "baby," I use it in two tenses — present and future.

Answer me at this address, like the Juliet I saw at Drury Lane — when was it? — yesterday. And whatever your answer is, if you will say that you and Compton will meet us at the North Kent Station, London Bridge, next Sunday at a quarter before one, and will come down here for a breath of sweet air and stay all night, you will give your friends great pleasure. Not least among them, Yours faithfully.

CCCXXXV. W. C. MACREADY

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,
Monday, August 3, 1857.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — I write to you in reference to your last note, as soon as I positively know our final movements in the Jerrold matter.

We are going to wind up by acting at Manchester (on solemn requisition) on the evenings of Friday and Saturday, the 21st and 22d (actresses substituted for the girls, of course). We shall have to leave here on the morning of the 20th. You thought of coming on the 16th; can't you make it a day or two earlier, so as to be with us a whole week? Decide and pronounce. Again, cannot you bring Katey with you? Decide and pronounce thereupon, also.

I read at Manchester last Friday. As many thousand people were there as you like to name. The collection of pictures in the Exhibition is wonderful. And the power with which the modern English school asserts itself is a very gratifying and delightful thing to behold. The care for the common people, in the provision made for their comfort and refreshment, is also admirable and worthy of all commendation. But they want more amusement, and particularly (as it strikes me) *something in motion, though it were only a twisting fountain.* The thing *is too still after their lives of machinery*, and art flies over their *heads in consequence.*

I hope you have seen my tussle with the "Edinburgh." I saw the chance last Friday week, as I was going down to read the "Carol" in St. Martin's Hall. Instantly turned to, then and there, and wrote half the article. Flew out of bed early next morning, and finished it by noon. Went down to Gallery of Illustration (we acted that night), did the day's business, corrected the proofs in polar costume in dressing-room, broke up two numbers of "Household Words" to get it out directly, played in "Frozen Deep" and "Uncle John," presided at supper of company, made no end of speeches, went home and gave in completely for four hours, then got sound asleep, and next day was as fresh as you used to be in the far-off days of your lusty youth.

All here send kindest love to your dear good sister and all the house. Ever and ever affectionately.

CCCXXXVI. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday Afternoon, August 9, 1857.

MY DEAR STONE, — Now here, without any preface, is a

P. S. — If you play, I shall immediately announce it to all concerned. If you don't, I shall go on as if nothing had happened, and shall say nothing to any one.

CCCXXXVII. HENRY AUSTIN

Gad's Hill Place, Saturday, August 15, 1857.

My dear Henry, — At last, I am happy to inform you, we have got at a famous spring!! It rushed in this morning, ten foot deep. And our friends talk of its supplying "a ton a minute for yourself and your family, sir, for nevermore."

They ask leave to bore ten feet lower, to prevent the possibility of what they call "a choking with sullage." Likewise, they are going to insert "a rose-headed pipe;" at the mention of which implement, I am (secretly) well-nigh distracted, having no idea of what it means. But I have said "Yes," besides instantly standing a bottle of gin. Can you come back, and can you get down on Monday morning, to advise and endeavour to decide on the mechanical force we shall use for raising the water? I would return with you, as I shall have to be in town until Thursday, and then to go to Manchester until the following Tuesday.

I send this by hand to John, to bring to you.

Ever affectionately.

CCCXXXVIII. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

Gad's Hill Place, Monday, August 17, 1857.

My dear Stone, — I received your kind note this morning, and write this reply here to take to London with me and post in town, being bound for that village and three days' drill of the professional ladies who are to succeed the Tavistock girls.

My book I inclose. There is a slight alteration (which does not affect you) at the end of the first act, in order that the piece may be played through without having the drop-curtain down. You will not find the situations or business difficult, with me on the spot to put you right.

Now, as to the dress. You will want a pair of pumps, and a pair of white silk *socks; these* you can get at Manchester. The *extravagantly and anciently frilled* shirts that I have had got up *for the part, I will bring you* down; large white waistcoat, I will

ing you down; large white hat, I will bring you down; dress-
g-gown, I will bring you down; white gloves and ditto choker
ou can get at Manchester. There then remain only a pair
common nankeen tights, to button below the calf, and blue
edding-coat. The nankeen tights you had best get made at
ice; my "Uncle John" coat I will send you down in a parcel
to-morrow's train, to have altered in Manchester to your
ape and figure. You will then be quite independent of Chris-
an chance and Jewish Nathan, which latter potentate is now
Canterbury with the cricket amateurs, and might fail.

A Thursday's rehearsal is (unfortunately) now impracticable,
e passes for the railway being all made out, and the company's
iling orders issued. But, as I have already suggested, with a
reful rehearsal on Friday morning, and with me at the wing at
ight to put you right, you will find yourself sliding through it
sily. There is nothing in the least complicated in the business.
s to the dance, you have only to knock yourself up for a twelve-
onth and it will go nobly.

After all, too, if you *should*, through any unlucky break-down,
me to be afraid of it, I am no worse off than I was before, if I

immense let, whereas I might have done it at first, etc., etc., etc. Having no desire but for the success of our object, and a becoming recognition on my part of the kind Manchester public's cordiality, I gave way, and thought it best to go on.

I do so against the grain, and against every inclination, and against the strongest feeling of gratitude to you. My people at home will be miserable too when they hear I am going to do it. If I could have heard from you sooner, and got the bill out sooner, I should have been firmer in considering my own necessity of relief. As it is, I sneak under; and I hope you will feel the reasons, and approve.

Ever affectionately.

CCCXL. HENRY AUSTIN

GAD'S HILL PLACE, Wednesday, September 2, 1857.

MY DEAR HENRY, — The second conspirator has been here this morning to ask whether you wish the windlass to be left in the yard, and whether you will want him and his mate any more, and, if so, when? Of course he says (rolling something in the form of a fillet in at one broken tooth all the while, and rolling it out at another) that they could wish fur to have the windlass if it war n't any ways a hill convenience fur to fetch her away. I have told him that if he will come back on Friday he shall have your reply. Will you, therefore, send it me by return of post? He says he 'll "look up" (as if he was an astronomer) "a Friday arterdinner."

On Monday I am going away with Collins for ten days or a fortnight, on a "tour in search of an article" for "Household Words." We have not the least idea where we are going; but *he* says, "Let 's look at the Norfolk coast," and *I* say, "Let 's look at the back of the Atlantic." I don't quite know what I mean by that; but have a general impression that I mean something knowing.

I am horribly used up after the Jerrold business. Low spirits, low pulse, low voice, intense reaction. If I were not, like Mr. Micawber, "falling back for a spring" on Monday, I think I should slink into a corner and cry.

Ever affectionately.

CCCXLI. MISS HOGARTH

ALLONBY, CUMBERLAND, Wednesday Night, September 9, 1857.

MY DEAR GEORGY, — Think of Collins's usual luck with me! We went up a Cumberland mountain yesterday — a huge black hill, fifteen hundred feet high. We took for a guide a capital innkeeper hard by. It rained in torrents — as it only does rain in a hill country — the whole time. At the top, there were black mists and the darkness of night. It then came out that the innkeeper had not been up for twenty years, and he lost his head and himself altogether; and we could n't get down again! What wonders the Inimitable performed with his compass until it broke with the heat and wet of his pocket, no matter; it did break, and then we wandered about, until it was clear to the Inimitable that the night must be passed there, and the enterprising travellers probably die of cold. We took our own way about coming down, struck, and declared that the guide might wander where he would, but we would follow a water-course we lighted upon, and which must come at last to the river. This necessitated amazing gymnastics; in the course of which performances, Collins fell into the said water-course with his ankle sprained, and the great ligament of the foot and leg swollen I don't know how big.

How I enacted Wardour over again in carrying him down, and what a business it was to get him down; I may say in Gibbs's words: "Vi lascio a giudicare!" But he was got down somehow, and we got off the mountain somehow; and now I carry him to bed, and into and out of carriages, exactly like Wardour in private life. I don't believe he will stand for a month to come. He has had a doctor, and can wear neither shoe nor stocking, and has his foot wrapped up in a flannel waistcoat, and has a breakfast saucer of liniment, and a horrible dabbling of lotion incessantly in progress. We laugh at it all, but I doubt very much whether he can go on to Doncaster. It will be a miserable blow to our "H. W." scheme, and I say nothing about it as yet; but he is really so crippled that I doubt the getting him there. We have resolved to fall to work tomorrow morning and begin our writing; and there, for the present, that point rests.

This is a little place with fifty houses, five bathing-machines,

five girls in straw hats, five men in straw hats, and no other company. The little houses are all in half-mourning — yellow stone on white stone, and black; and it reminds me of what Broadstairs might have been if it had not inherited a cliff, and had been an Irishman. But this is a capital little homely inn, looking out upon the sea; and we are really very comfortably lodged. I can just stand upright in my bedroom. Otherwise, it is a good deal like one of Ballard's top rooms. We have a very obliging and comfortable landlady; and it is a clean nice place in a rough wild country. We came here haphazard, but could not have done better.

We lay last night at a place called Wigton — also in half-mourning — with the wonderful peculiarity that it had no population, no business, no streets to speak of; but five linen-drapers within range of our small windows, one linen-draper's next door, and five more linen-drapers round the corner. I ordered a night-light in my bedroom. A queer little old woman brought me one of the common Child's night-lights, and seeming to think that I looked at it with interest, said: "It's joost a vara kee-yourious thing, sir, and joost new coom oop. It'll burn awt hoors a' end, an no goottther, nor no waste, nor ony sike a thing, if you can creedit what I say, seein' the airticle."

Of course *I* shall go to Doncaster, whether or no (please God), and my postage directions to you remain unchanged. Love to Mamey, Katey, Charley, Harry, and the darling Plorn.

Ever affectionately.

CCCXLII. MISS HOGARTH

LANCASTER, Saturday Night, September 12, 1857.

MY DEAR GEORGY, — I received your letter at Allonby yesterday, and was delighted to get it. We came back to Carlisle last night (to a capital inn, kept by Breach's brother), and came on here to-day. We are on our way to Doncaster; but Sabbath observance throws all the trains out; and although it is not a hundred miles from here, we shall have, as well as I can make out the complicated lists of trains, to sleep at Leeds — which I particularly detest as an odious place — to-morrow night.

Accustomed *as you are to the* homage which men delight to *render to the Inimitable, you would* be scarcely prepared for the *proportions it assumes in this* northern country. Station-mas-

ters assist him to alight from carriages, deputations await him in hotel entries, innkeepers bow down before him and put him into regal rooms, the town goes down to the platform to see him off, and Collins's ankle goes into the newspapers!!!

It is a great deal better than it was, and he can get into new hotels and up the stairs with two thick sticks, like an admiral in a farce. His spirits have improved in a corresponding degree, and he contemplates cheerfully the keeping house at Doncaster. I thought (as I told you) he would never have gone there, but he seems quite up to the mark now. Of course he can never walk out, or see anything of any place. We have done our first paper for "H. W.," and sent it up to the printer's.

The landlady of the little inn at Allonby lived at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, when I went down there before "Nickleby," and was smuggled into the room to see me, when I was secretly found out. She is an immensely fat woman now. "But I could tuck my arm round her waist then, Mr. Dickens," the landlord said when she told me the story as I was going to bed the night before last. "And can't you do it now," I said, "you insensible dog? Look at me! Here's a picture!"

Kiss the darling Plorn, who is often in my thoughts. Best love to Charley, Mamey, and Katie. I will write to you again from Doncaster, where I shall be rejoiced to find another letter from you.

Ever affectionately, my dearest Georgy.

CCCXLIII. MISS HOGARTH

Angel Hotel, Doncaster,
Tuesday, September 15, 1857.

My dear Georgy, — I found your letter here on my arrival yesterday. I had hoped that the wall would have been almost finished by this time, and the additions to the house almost finished, too — but patience, patience!

We have very good, clean, and quiet apartments here, on the second floor, looking down into the main street, which is full of horse-jockeys, betters, drunkards, and other blackguards, from morning to night — and all night. The races begin to-day and last till Friday, which is the Cup Day. I am not going to the course this morning, but have engaged a carriage (open, and pair) for to-morrow and Friday.

"The Frozen Deep's" author gets on as well as could be expected. He can hobble up and down stairs when absolutely necessary, and limps to his bedroom on the same floor. He talks of going to the theatre to-night in a cab, which will be the first occasion of his going out, except to travel, since the accident. He sends his kind regards and thanks for inquiries and condolence. I am perpetually tidying the rooms after him, and carrying all sorts of untidy things which belong to him into his bedroom, which is a picture of disorder. You will please to imagine mine, airy and clean, little dressing-room attached, eight water-jugs (I never saw such a supply), capital sponge-bath, perfect arrangement, and exquisite neatness. We breakfast at half-past eight, and fall to work for "H. W." afterwards. Then I go out, and — hem! look for subjects.

The mayor called this morning to do the honours of the town, whom it pleased the Inimitable to receive with great courtesy and affability. He propounded invitation to public *déjeûner*, which *it did not please* the Inimitable to receive, and *which he graciously rejected.*

That 's all the news. Everything I can describe by hook or

by crook, I describe for "H. W." So there is nothing of that sort left for letters.

Best love to dear Mamey and Katey, and to Charley, and to Harry. Any number of kisses to the noble Plorn.

Ever affectionately.

CCCXLIV. WILKIE COLLINS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday, January 17, 1858.

MY DEAR WILKIE, — I am very sorry to receive so bad an account of the foot. But I hope it is all in the past tense now.

I met with an incident the other day, which I think is a good deal in your way, for introduction either into a long or short story. Dr. Sutherland and Dr. Monro went over St. Luke's with me (only last Friday), to show me some distinctly and remarkably developed types of insanity. Among other patients, we passed a deaf and dumb man, now afflicted with incurable madness too, of whom they said that it was only when his madness began to develop itself in strongly marked mad actions, that it began to be suspected. "Though it had been there, no doubt some time." This led me to consider suspiciously what

stitution) "took with fits." For this distressing complaint he was medically treated; the doctor "collared him, and laid him on his back upon the airy stones" — please to observe what follows — "and she was told, to ease her mind, his 'owls was organs."

That is to say, Mrs. Harris, lying exhausted on her bed, in the first sweet relief of freedom from pain, merely covered with the counterpane, and not yet "put comfortable," hears a noise apparently proceeding from the back yard, and says, in a flushed and hysterical manner: "What 'owls are those? Who is a 'owling? Not my ugebond?" Upon which the doctor, looking round one of the bottom posts of the bed, and taking Mrs. Harris's pulse in a reassuring manner, says, with much admirable presence of mind: "Howls, my dear madam? — no, no, no! What are we thinking of? Howls, my dear Mrs. Harris? Ha, ha, ha! Organs, ma'am, organs. Organs in the streets, Mrs. Harris; no howls."

Yours faithfully.

CCCXLVI. W. M. THACKERAY

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Tuesday, February 2, 1858.

MY DEAR THACKERAY, — The wisdom of Parliament, in that expensive act of its greatness which constitutes the Guild, prohibits that corporation *from doing anything* until it shall have existed in a perfectly useless condition for seven years. This clause (introduced by some private-bill magnate of official might) seemed so ridiculous, that nobody could believe it to have this meaning; but as I felt clear about it when we were on the very verge of granting an excellent literary annuity, I referred the point to counsel, and my construction was confirmed without a doubt.

It is therefore needless to inquire whether an association in the nature of a provident society could address itself to such a case as you confide to me. The prohibition has still two or three years of life in it.

But assuming the gentleman's title to be considered as an "author" as established, there is no question that it comes within the scope of the *Literary Fund*. They would habitually "lend" money if they did what I consider to be their duty; as it is, they only give money, but they give it in such instances.

I have forwarded the envelope to the Society of Arts, with a request that they will present it to Prince Albert, approaching H. R. H. in the Siamese manner.

Ever faithfully.

CCCXLVII. JOHN FORSTER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Wednesday Night, February 3, 1858.

MY DEAR FORSTER, — I beg to report two phenomena: —

1. An excellent little play in one act, by Marston, at the Lyceum; title, "A Hard Struggle;" as good as "La Joie fait Peur," though not at all like it.

2. Capital acting in the same play, by Mr. Dillon. Real good acting, in imitation of nobody, and honestly made out by himself!!

I went (at Marston's request) last night, and cried till I sobbed again. I have not seen a word about it from Oxenford. But it is as wholesome and manly a thing altogether as I have seen for many a day. (I would have given a hundred pounds to have played Mr. Dillon's part.)

such pains, and expressing such natural and vigorous sentiment. There is only one thing I should have liked him to change. I am much mistaken if any man — least of all any such man — would crush a letter written by the hand of the woman he loved. Hold it to his heart unconsciously and look about for it the while, he might; or he might do any other thing with it that expressed a habit of tenderness and affection in association with the idea of her; but he would never crush it under any circumstances. He would as soon crush her heart.

You will see how closely I went with him, by my minding so slight an incident in so fine a performance. There is no one who could approach him in it; and I am bound to add that he surprised me as much as he pleased me.

I think it might be worth while to try the people at the Français with the piece. They are very good in one-act plays; such plays take well there, and this seems to me well suited to them. If you would like Samson or Regnier to read the play (in English), I know them well, and would be very glad indeed to tell them that I sent it with your sanction because I had been so much struck by it.

Faithfully yours always.

CCCXLIX. MONSIEUR REGNIER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, W. C., Thursday, February 11, 1858.

MY DEAR REGNIER, — I want you to read the inclosed little play. You will see that it is in one act — about the length of "La Joie fait Peur." It is now acting at the Lyceum Theatre here, with very great success. The author is Mr. Westland Marston, a dramatic writer of reputation, who wrote a very well-known tragedy called "The Patrician's Daughter," in which Macready and Miss Faucit acted (under Macready's management at Drury Lane) some years ago.

This little piece is so very powerful on the stage, its interest is so simple and natural, and the part of Reuben is such a very fine one, that I cannot help thinking you might make one grand coup with it, if with your skilful hand you arranged it for the Français. I have communicated this idea of mine to the author, "*et là-dessus je vous écris.*" I am anxious to know your opinion, and shall expect with much interest to receive a little letter from you at your convenience.

Mrs. Dickens, Miss Hogarth, and all the house send a thousand kind loves and regards to Madame Regnier and the dear little boys. You will bring them to London when you come, with all the force of the Français — will you not?

Ever, my dear Regnier, faithfully your friend.

CCCL. MONSIEUR REGNIER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Saturday, February 20, 1858.

MY DEAR REGNIER, — Let me thank you with all my heart for your most patient and kind letter. I made its contents known to Mr. Marston, and I inclose you his reply. You will see that he cheerfully leaves the matter in your hands, and abides by your opinion and discretion.

You need not return his letter, my friend. There is great excitement here this morning, in consequence of the failure of the Ministry last night to carry the bill they brought in to please your Emperor and his troops. I, for one, am extremely glad of their defeat.

"Le vieux P——," I have no doubt, will go staggering

amazing to me that it is not at this day ten times as large and rich as it is. But I hope and trust that I have happily been able to give it a good thrust onward into a great course. We all send our most affectionate love to all the house. I am devising all sorts of things in my mind, and am in a state of energetic restlessness incomprehensible to the calm philosophers of Dorsetshire. What a dream it is, this work and strife, and how little we do in the dream after all! Only last night, in my sleep, I was bent upon getting over a perspective of barriers, with my hands and feet bound. Pretty much what we are all about, waking, I think?

But, Lord! (as I said before) you smile pityingly, not bitterly, at this hubbub, and moralise upon it, in the calm evenings when there is no school at Sherborne.

Ever affectionately and truly.

CCCLII. MRS. HOGGE [1]

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W. C.,
Wednesday, April 14, 1858.

MY DEAR MRS. HOGGE, — After the profoundest cogitation, I come reluctantly to the conclusion that I do not know that orphan. If you were the lady in want of him, I should certainly offer *myself*. But as you are not, I will not hear of the situation.

It is wonderful to think how many charming little people there must be, to whom this proposal would be like a revelation from Heaven. Why don't I know one, and come to Kensington, boy in hand, as if I had walked (I wished to God I had) out of a fairy tale! But no, I do *not* know that orphan. He is crying somewhere, by himself, at this moment. I can't dry his eyes. He is being neglected by some ogress of a nurse. I can't rescue him.

I will make a point of going to the Athenæum on Monday night; and if I had five hundred votes to give, Mr. Macdonald should have them all, for your sake.

I grieve to hear that you have been ill, but I hope that the spring, when it comes, will find you blooming with the rest of the flowers.

Very faithfully yours.

[1] Niece to the Rev. W. Harness.

CCCLIII. EDMUND YATES

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W. C.,
Wednesday, April 28, 1858.

MY DEAR YATES, — For a good many years I have suffered a great deal from charities, but never anything like what I suffer now. The amount of correspondence they inflict upon me is really incredible. But this is nothing. Benevolent men get behind the piers of the gates, lying in wait for my going out; and when I peep shrinkingly from my study windows, I see their pot-bellied shadows projected on the gravel. Benevolent bullies drive up in hansom cabs (with engraved portraits of their benevolent institutions hanging over the aprons, like banners on their outward walls), and stay long at the door. Benevolent area sneaks get lost in the kitchens, and are found to impede the circulation of the knife-cleaning machine. My man has been heard to say (at The Burton Arms) "that if it was a wicious place, well and good — *that* ain't door work; but that wen all the Christian wirtues is always a shoulderin' and a helberin' on you in the 'all, a twyin' to git past you and

At this present moment I am on my little Kentish freehold (*not* in top-boots, and not particularly prejudiced that I know of), looking on as pretty a view out of my study window as you will find in a long day's English ride. My little place is a grave red brick house (time of George the First, I suppose), which I have added to and stuck bits upon in all manner of ways, so that it is as pleasantly irregular, and as violently opposed to all architectural ideas, as the most hopeful man could possibly desire. It is on the summit of Gad's Hill. The robbery was committed before the door, on the man with the treasure, and Falstaff ran away from the identical spot of ground now covered by the room in which I write. A little rustic alehouse, called The Sir John Falstaff, is over the way — has been over the way, ever since, in honour of the event. Cobham Woods and Park are behind the house; the distant Thames in front; the Medway, with Rochester, and its old castle and cathedral, on one side. The whole stupendous property is on the old Dover Road, so when you come, come by the North Kent Railway (not the South-Eastern) to Strood or Higham, and I 'll drive over to fetch you.

The blessed woods and fields have done me a world of good, and I am quite myself again. The children are all as happy as children can be. My eldest daughter, Mary, keeps house, with a state and gravity becoming that high position; wherein she is assisted by her sister Katie, and by her aunt Georgina, who is, and always has been, like another sister. Two big dogs, a bloodhound and a St. Bernard, direct from a convent of that name, where I think you once were, are their principal attendants in the green lanes. These latter instantly untie the neckerchiefs of all tramps and prowlers who approach their presence, so that they wander about without any escort, and drive big horses in basket-phaetons through murderous bye-ways, and never come to grief. They are very curious about your daughters, and send all kinds of loves to them and to Mrs Cerjat, in which I heartily join.

You will have read in the papers that the Thames in London is most horrible. I have to cross Waterloo or London Bridge to get to the railroad when I come down here, and I can certify that the offensive *smells, even in that* short whiff, have been of *a most head-and-stomach-distending* nature. Nobody knows *what is to be done; at least* everybody knows a plan, and every-

body else knows it won't do; in the mean time cart-loads of chloride of lime are shot into the filthy stream, and do something, I hope. You will know, before you get this, that the American telegraph line has parted again, at which most men are sorry, but very few surprised. This is all the news, except that there is an Italian Opera at Drury Lane, price eighteenpence to the pit, where Viardot, by far the greatest artist of them all, sings, and which is full when the dear opera can't let a box; and except that the weather has been exceptionally hot, but is now quite cool. On the top of this hill it has been cold, actually cold at night, for more than a week past.

I am going over to Rochester to post this letter, and must write another to Townshend before I go. My dear Cerjat, I have written lightly enough, because I want you to know that I am becoming cheerful and hearty. God bless you! I love you, and I know that you love me.

Ever your attached and affectionate.

CCCLV. MISS HOGARTH

[redacted]

For "Mrs. Gamp and the Boots," to-night, we have also a very promising let. But the races are on, and there are two public balls to-night, and the yacht squadron are all at Cherbourg to boot. Arthur is of the opinion that "Two Sixties" will do very well for us. I doubt the "Two Sixties" myself. *Mais nous verrons.*

The room is a very handsome one, but it is on the top of a windy and muddy hill, leading (literally) to nowhere; and it looks (except that it is new and *mortary*) as if the subsidence of the waters after the Deluge might have left it where it is. I have to go right through the company to get to the platform. Big doors slam and resound when anybody comes in; and all the company seem afraid of one another. Nevertheless they were a sensible audience last night, and much impressed and pleased.

Tracy is in the room (wandering about, and never finishing a sentence), and sends all manner of sea-loves to you and the dear girls. I send all manner of land-loves to you from myself, out of my heart of hearts, and also to my dear Plorn and the boys.

Arthur sends his kindest love. He knows only two characters. He is either always corresponding, like a Secretary of State, or he is transformed into a rout-furniture dealer of Rathbone Place, and drags forms about with the greatest violence, without his coat. I have no time to add another word.

Ever, dearest Georgy, your most affectionate.

CCCLVI. MISS DICKENS

London, Saturday, August 7, 1858.

My dearest Mamey, — The closing night at Plymouth was a very great scene, and the morning there was exceedingly good too. You will be glad to hear that at Clifton last night, a torrent of five hundred shillings bore Arthur away, pounded him against the wall, flowed on to the seats over his body, scratched him, and damaged his best dress-suit. All to his unspeakable joy.

This is a very short letter, but I am going to the Burlington Arcade, desperately resolved to have all those wonderful instruments put into operation *on my head*, with a view to refreshing it.

Kindest love to Georgy and to all.

Ever your affectionate.

CCCLVII. MISS DICKENS

Shrewsbury, Thursday, August 12, 1858.

A wonderful audience last night at Wolverhampton. If such a thing can be, they were even quicker and more intelligent than the audience I had in Edinburgh. They were so wonderfully good and were so much on the alert this morning by nine o'clock for another reading, that we are going back there at about our Bradford time. I never saw such people. And the local agent would take no money, and charge no expenses of his own.

This place looks what Plorn would call "ortily" dull. Local agent predicts, however, "great satisfaction to Mr. Dickens, and excellent attendance." I have just been to look at the hall, where everything was wrong, and where I have left Arthur making a platform for me out of dining-tables.

If he comes back in time, I am not quite sure but that he is himself going to write to Gad's Hill. We talk of coming up from Chester *in the night to-morrow, after the reading;* and of showing our precious selves at an apparently impossibly early hour in the Gad's Hill breakfast-room on Saturday morning.

I have not felt the fatigue to any extent worth mentioning; though I get, every night, into the most violent heats. We are going to dine at three o'clock (it wants a quarter now), and have not been here two hours, so I have seen nothing of Clement.

Tell Georgy with my love, that I read in the same room in which we acted, but at the end opposite to that where our stage was. We are not at the inn where the amateur company put up, but at The Lion, where the fair Miss Mitchell was lodged alone. We have the strangest little rooms (sitting-room and two bedrooms all together), the ceilings of which I can touch with my hand. The windows bulge out over the street, as if they were little stern-windows in a ship. And a door opens out of the sitting-room on to a little open gallery with plants in it, where one leans over a queer old rail, and looks all down hill and slantwise at the crookedest black and yellow old houses, all manner of shapes except straight shapes. To get into this room we come through a china-closet; and the man in laying

the cloth has actually knocked down, in that repository, two geraniums and Napoleon Bonaparte.

I think that 's all I have to say, except that at the Wolverhampton theatre they played "Oliver Twist" last night (Mr. Toole the Artful Dodger), "in consequence of the illustrious author honouring the town with his presence." We heard that the device succeeded very well, and that they got a good many people.

John's spirits have been equable and good since we rejoined him. Berry has always got something the matter with his digestion — seems to me the male gender of Maria Jolly, and ought to take nothing but Revalenta Arabica. Bottled ale is not to be got in these parts, and Arthur is thrown upon draught.

My dearest love to Georgy and to Katey, also to Marguerite. Also to all the boys and the noble Plorn.

Ever your affectionate father.

CCCLVIII. MISS HOGARTH

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W. C.,
Wednesday Morning, August 18, 1858.

I write this hurried line before starting, to report that my cold is decidedly better, thank God (though still bad), and that I hope to be able to stagger through to-night. After dinner yesterday I began to recover my voice, and I think I sang half the Irish Melodies to myself, as I walked about to test it. I got home at half-past ten, and mustard-poulticed and barley-watered myself tremendously.

Love to the dear girls, and to all.

Ever affectionately.

CCCLIX. THE SAME

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL,
Friday Night, August 20, 1858.

I received your welcome and interesting letter to-day, and I write you a very hurried and bad reply; but it is *after the reading*, and you will *take the will* for the deed under these *trying circumstances, I know.*

We have had a tremendous night; the largest house I have

ever had since I first began — two thousand three hundred people. To-morrow afternoon, at three, I read again.

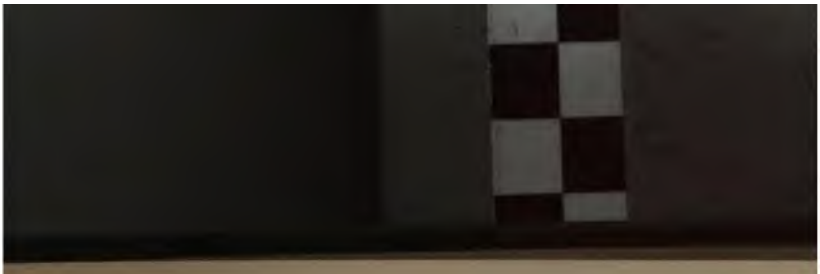
My cold has been oppressive, and is not yet gone. I have been very hard to sleep too, and last night I was all but sleepless. This morning I was very dull and seedy; but I got a good walk, and picked up again. It has been blowing all day, and I fear we shall have a sick passage over to Dublin to-morrow night.

Tell Mamie (with my dear love to her and Kate) that I will write to her from Dublin — probably on Sunday. Tell her too that the stories she told me in her letter were not only capital stories in themselves, but *excellently told* too.

What Arthur's state has been to-night — he, John, Berry, and Boylett, all taking money and going mad together — you *cannot* imagine. They turned away hundreds, sold all the books, rolled on the ground of my room knee-deep in cheques, and made a perfect pantomime of the whole thing. He has kept quite well, I am happy to say, and sends a hundred loves.

In great haste and fatigue.

Ever affectionately.



and did not get here till noon yesterday. Donnybrook Fair, or what remains of it, is going on, within two or three miles of Dublin. They went out there yesterday in a jaunting-car, and John described it to us at dinner-time (with his eyebrows lifted up, and his legs well asunder), as "Johnny Brooks's Fair;" at which Arthur, who was drinking bitter ale, nearly laughed himself to death. Berry is always unfortunate; and when I asked what had happened to Berry on board the steamboat, it appeared that "an Irish gentleman which was drunk, and fancied himself the captain, wanted to knock Berry down."

I am surprised by finding this place very much larger than I had supposed it to be. Its bye-parts are bad enough, but cleaner, too, than I had supposed them to be, and certainly very much cleaner than the old town of Edinburgh. The man who drove our jaunting-car yesterday had n't a piece in his coat as big as a penny roll, and had had his hat on (apparently without brushing it) ever since he was grown up. But he was remarkably intelligent and agreeable, with something to say about everything. For instance, when I asked him what a certain building was, he did n't say "courts of law" and nothing else, but: "Av you plase, sir, it 's the foor coorts o' looyers, where Misther O'Connell stood his trial wunst, ye 'll remimber, sir, afore I tell ye of it." When we got into the Phœnix Park, he looked round him as if it were his own, and said: "THAT 'S a park, sir, av yer plase." I complimented it, and he said: "Gintlemen tills me as they 'r bin, sir, over Europe, and never see a park aqualling ov it. 'T is eight mile roond, sir, ten mile and a half long, and in the month of May the hawthorn-trees are as beautiful as brides with their white jewels on. Yonder 's the vice-regal lodge, sir; in them two corners lives the two sicre-tirries, wishing I was them, sir. There 's air here, sir, av yer plase! There 's scenery here, sir! There 's mountains — thim, sir! Yer coonsider it a park, sir? It is that, sir!"

You should have heard John in my bedroom this morning endeavouring to imitate a bath-man, who had resented his interference, and had said as to the shower-bath: "Yer 'll not be touching *that*, young man. Divil a touch yer 'll touch o' that insthrument, young man!" It was more ridiculously unlike the reality *than I can express* to you, yet he was so *delighted with his powers that* he went off in the absurdest *little ginger-beery giggle, backing into* my portmanteau all the *time.*

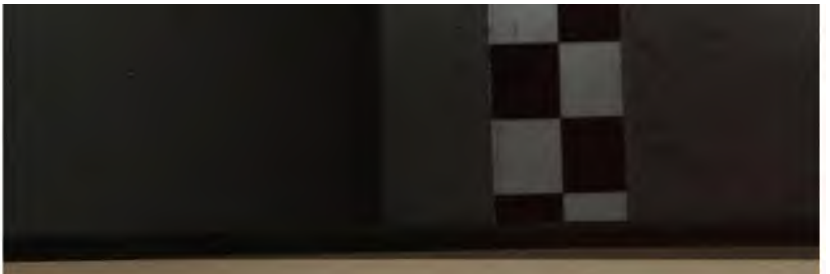
My dear love to Katie and to Georgy, also to the noble Plorn and all the boys. I shall write to Katie next, and then to Aunty. My cold, I am happy to report, is very much better. I lay in the wet all night on deck, on board the boat, but am not as yet any the worse for it. Arthur was quite insensible when we got to Dublin, and stared at our luggage without in the least offering to claim it. He left his kindest love for all before he went out. I will keep the envelope open until he comes in.

Ever, my dearest Mamie,
Your most affectionate father.

CCCLXI. MISS HOGARTH

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, Wednesday, August 25, 1858.

I begin my letter to you to-day, though I don't know when I may send it off. We had a very good house last night, after all, that is to say, a great rush of shillings and good half-crowns, though the stalls were comparatively few. For "Little Dombey," this morning, we have an immense stall let — already



Cork, who has just now (noon) written to me, proposing dinners and excursions in that neighbourhood which would fill about a week; I being there a day and a half, and reading three times. The work will be very severe here, and I begin to feel depressed by it. (By "here," I mean Ireland generally, please to observe.)

We meant, as I said in a letter to Katie, to go to Queenstown yesterday and bask on the seashore. But there is always so much to do that we could n't manage it after all. We expect a tremendous house to-morrow night as well as to-day; and Arthur is at the present instant up to his eyes in business (and seats), and, between his regret at losing to-night, and his desire to make the room hold twice as many as it *will* hold, is half distracted. I have become a wonderful Irishman — must play an Irish part some day — and his only relaxation is when I enact "John and the Boots," which I consequently do enact all day long. The papers are full of remarks upon my white tie, and describe it as being of enormous size, which is a wonderful delusion, because, as you very well know, it is a small tie. Generally, I am happy to report, the Emerald press is in favour of my appearance, and likes my eyes. But one gentleman comes out with a letter at Cork, wherein he says that although only forty-six I look like an old man. *He* is a rum customer, I think.

The Rutherfords are living here, and wanted me to dine with them, which, I need n't say, could not be done; all manner of people have called, but I have seen only two. John has given it up altogether as to rivalry with the Boots, and did not come into my room this morning at all. Boots appeared triumphant and alone. He was waiting for me at the hotel door last night. "Whan't sart of a hoose, sur?" he asked me. "Capital." "The Lard be praised fur the 'onour o' Dooblin!"

Arthur buys bad apples in the streets and brings them home and does n't eat them, and then I am obliged to put them in the balcony because they make the room smell faint. Also he meets countrymen with honeycomb on their heads, and leads them (by the button-hole when they have one) to this gorgeous establishment and requests the bar to buy honeycomb for his breakfast; *then it stands upon the* sideboard uncovered and *the flies fall into it. He buys owls,* too, and castles, and other *horrible objects, made in bog-oak* (that material which is not

appreciated at Gad's Hill); and he is perpetually snipping pieces out of newspapers and sending them all over the world. While I am reading he conducts the correspondence, and his great delight is to show me seventeen or eighteen letters when I come, exhausted, into the retiring-place. Berry has not got into any particular trouble for forty-eight hours, except that he is all over boils. I have prescribed the yeast, but ineffectually. It is indeed a sight to see him and John sitting in pay-boxes, and surveying Ireland out of pigeon-holes.

Same Evening before Bedtime.

Everybody was at "Little Dombey" to-day, and although I had some little difficulty to work them up in consequence of the excessive crowding of the place, and the difficulty of shaking the people into their seats, the effect was unmistakable and profound. The crying was universal, and they were extraordinarily affected. There is no doubt we could stay here a week with that one reading, and fill the place every night. Hundreds of people have been there to-night, under the impression that it would come off again. It was a most decided and complete success.

Arthur has been imploring me to stop here on the Friday after Limerick, and read "Little Dombey" again. But I have positively said "No." The work is too hard. It is not like doing it in one easy room, and always the same room. With a different place every night, and a different audience with its own peculiarity every night, it is a tremendous strain. I was sick of it to-day before I began, then got myself into wonderful train.

Here follows a dialogue (but it requires imitation), which I had yesterday morning with a little boy of the house — landlord's son, I suppose — about Plorn's age. I am sitting on the sofa writing, and find him sitting beside me.

Inimitable. Holloa, old chap.

Young Ireland. Hal-loo!

Inimitable (*in his delightful way*). What a nice old fellow you are. I am very fond of little boys.

Young Ireland. Air yer? Ye'r right.

Inimitable. What do you learn, old fellow?

Young Ireland (*very intent on Inimitable, and always child-*

ish, except in his brogue). I lairn wureds of three sillibils, and wureds of two sillibils, and wureds of one sillibil.

Inimitable (*gaily*). Get out, you humbug! You learn only words of one syllable.

Young Ireland (*laughs heartily*). You may say that it is mostly wureds of one sillibil.

Inimitable. Can you write?

Young Ireland. Not yet. Things comes by deegrays.

Inimitable. Can you cipher?

Young Ireland (*very quickly*). Wha'at 's that?

Inimitable. Can you make figures?

Young Ireland. I can make a nought, which is not asy, being roond.

Inimitable. I say, old boy, was n't it you I saw on Sunday morning in the hall, in a soldier's cap? You know — in a soldier's cap?

Young Ireland (*cogitating deeply*). Was it a very good can?

...ble. Yes.

...eland. Did it fit unkommon?

... Yes.

...nd. Dat ... me!

... stupi ... at the room, to show people
..., who ... "them two old Paddies,"
... say ... ver see nothing like them
...diots ... They bow and walk back-
... gran ... en hustle them while they

... intention of going to the
... hment (they were doing
... a very bad jail, and the
... ve came back again, and
... her in a railway carriage,
... knocked up, whenever I
... n I go to bed as a mat-

... nd to all the boys. To
... f of course, in the first
... last Irish reading on
... t when we shall have

turned this week, once knocked off Belfast, I shall see land, and shall (like poor Timber in the days of old) "keep up a good heart." I get so wonderfully hot every night in my dress clothes, that they positively won't dry in the short interval they get, and I have been obliged to write to Doudney's to make me another suit, that I may have a constant change.

Ever, my dearest Georgy, most affectionately.

CCCLXII. MISS DICKENS

BELFAST, Saturday, August 28, 1858.

When I went down to the Rotunda at Dublin on Thursday night, I said to Arthur, who came rushing at me: "You need n't tell me. I know all about it." The moment I had come out of the door of the hotel (a mile off), I had come against the stream of people turned away. I had struggled against it to the room. There, the crowd in all the lobbies and passages was so great, that I had a difficulty in getting in. They had broken all the glass in the pay-boxes. They had offered frantic prices for stalls. Eleven bank-notes were thrust into that pay-box (Arthur saw them) at one time for eleven

there), and in spite of my gas suddenly going out at the time of the game of forfeits at Scrooge's nephew's, through some Belfastian gentleman accidentally treading on the flexible pipe, and needing to be relighted.

We shall not get to Cork before midday on Monday; it being difficult to get from here on a Sunday. We hope to be able to start away to-morrow morning to see the Giant's Causeway (some sixteen miles off), and in that case we shall sleep at Dublin to-morrow night, leaving here by the train at half-past three in the afternoon. Dublin, you must understand, is on the way to Cork. This is a fine place, surrounded by lofty hills. The streets are very wide, and the place is very prosperous. The whole ride from Dublin here is through a very picturesque and various country; and the amazing thing is, that it is all particularly neat and orderly, and that the houses (outside at all events) are all brightly whitewashed and remarkably clean. I want to climb one of the neighbouring hills before this morning's "Dombey." I am now waiting for Arthur, who has gone to the bank to remit his last accumulation of treasure to London.

Our men are rather indignant with the Irish crowds, because in the struggle they don't sell books, and because, in the pressure, they can't force a way into the room afterwards to sell them. They are deeply interested in the success, however, and are as zealous and ardent as possible. I shall write to Katie next. Give her my best love, and kiss the darling Plorn for me, and give my love to all the boys.

Ever, my dearest Mamie,

Your most affectionate father.

CCCLXIII. MISS HOGARTH

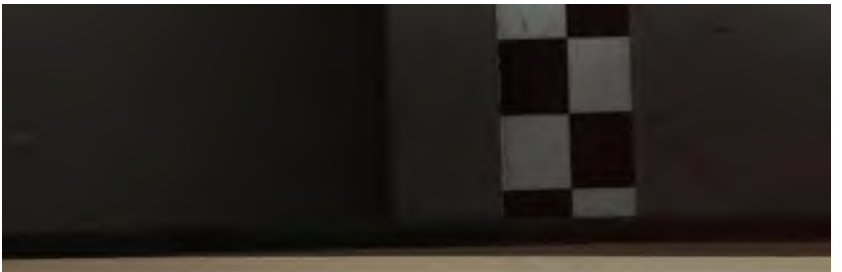
MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, Sunday Night, August 29, 1858.

I am so delighted to find your letter here to-night (eleven o'clock), and so afraid that, in the wear and tear of this strange life, I have written to Gad's Hill in the wrong order, and have not written to you, as I should, that I resolve to write this before going to bed. You will find it a wretchedly stupid letter; but *you may imagine*, my dearest girl, that I am tired.

The success at Belfast has been equal to the success here. *Enormous! We turned away* half the town. I think them a

better audience, on the whole, than Dublin; and the personal affection there was something overwhelming. I wish you and the dear girls could have seen the people look at me in the street; or heard them ask me, as I hurried to the hotel after reading last night, to "do me the honour to shake hands, Misther Dickens, and God bless you, sir; not ounly for the light you 've been to me this night, but for the light you 've been in mee house, sir (and God love your face), this many a year." Every night, by the bye, since I have been in Ireland, the ladies have beguiled John out of the bouquet from my coat. And yesterday morning, as I had showered the leaves from my geranium in reading "Little Dombey," they mounted the platform, after I was gone, and picked them all up as keep-sakes!

I have never seen *men* go in to cry so undisguisedly as they did at that reading yesterday afternoon. They made no attempt whatever to hide it, and certainly cried more than the women. As to the "Boots" at night, and "Mrs. Gamp" too, it was just one roar with me and them; for they made me laugh so that sometimes I *could not* compose my face to go on.



ready. He was in the last stage of prostration. The local agent was with me, and proposed that he (the wretched Arthur) should go to his office and balance the accounts then and there. He went, in the jacket and slippers, and came back in twenty minutes, *perfectly well*, in consequence of the admirable balance. He is now sitting opposite to me ON THE BAG OF SILVER, forty pounds (it must be dreadful hard), writing to Boulogne.

I suppose it is clear that the next letter I write is Katie's. Either from Cork or from Limerick, it shall report further. At Limerick I read in the theatre, there being no other place.

Best love to Mamie and Katie, and dear Plorn, and all the boys left when this comes to Gad's Hill; also to my dear good Anne, and her little woman. Ever affectionately.

CCCLXIV. WILKIE COLLINS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, September 6, 1858.

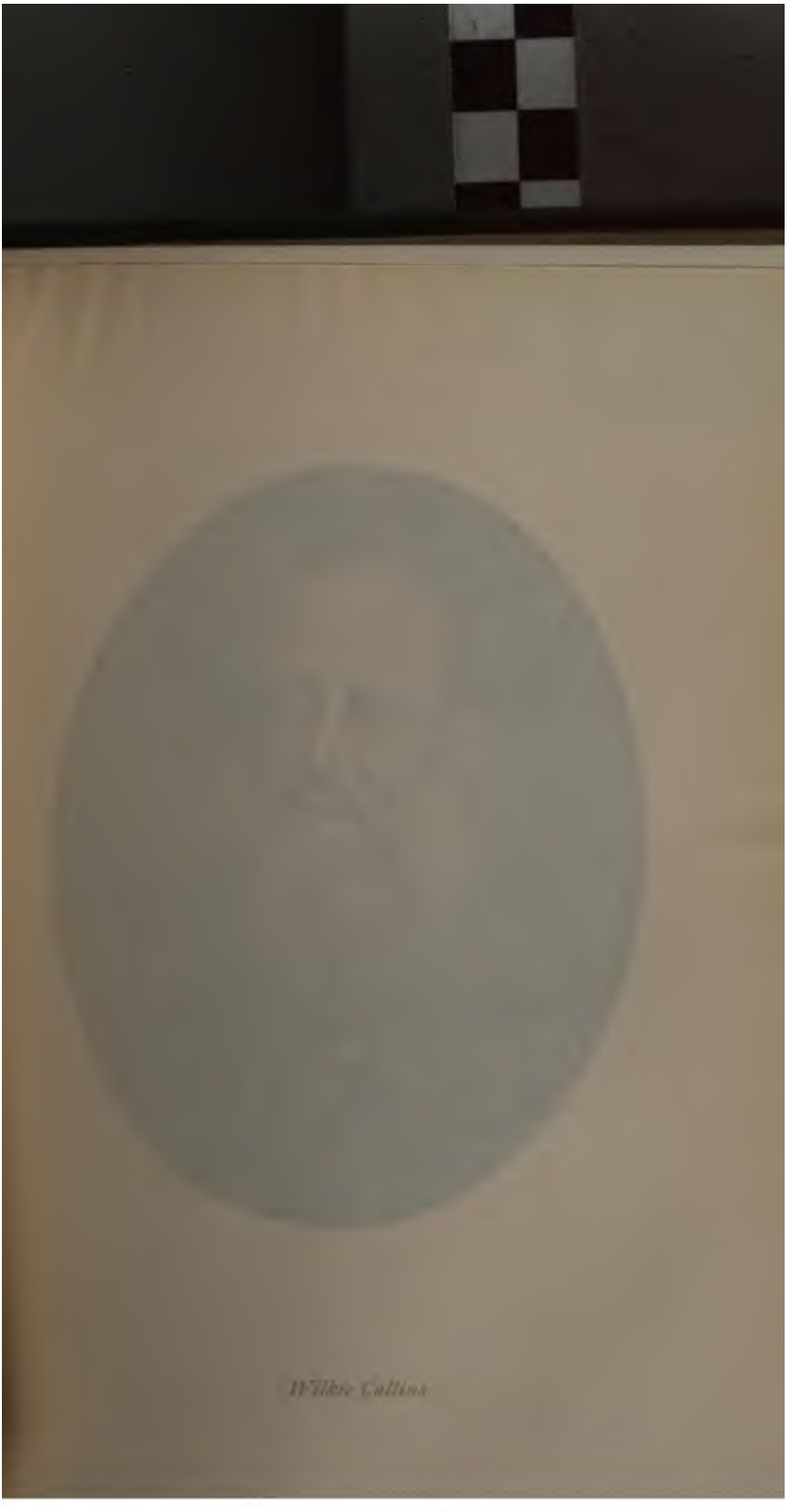
MY DEAR WILKIE, — First, let me report myself here for something less than eight-and-forty hours. I come last (and direct — a pretty hard journey) from Limerick. The success in Ireland has been immense.

The work is very hard, sometimes overpowering; but I am none the worse for it, and arrived here quite fresh.

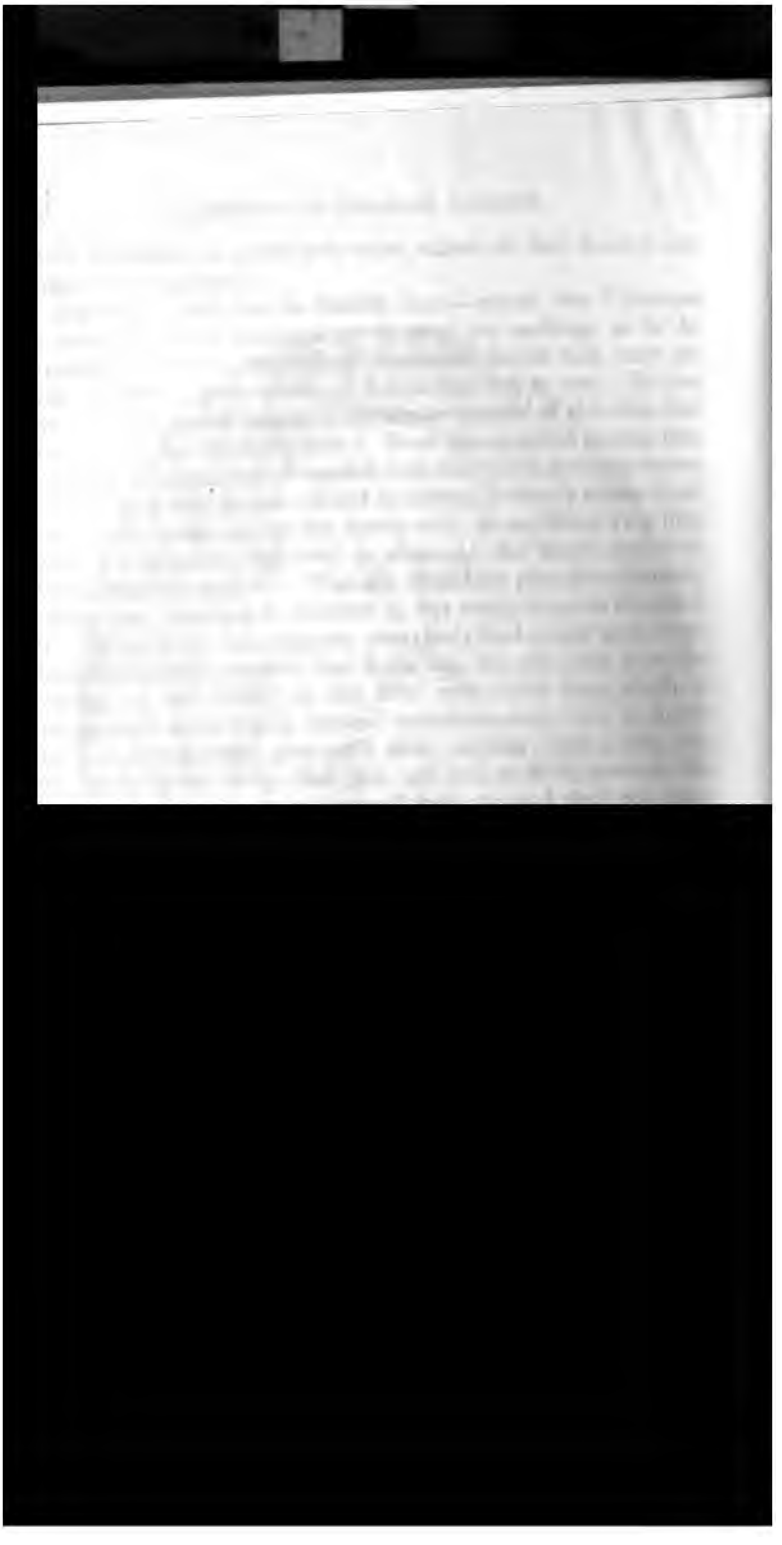
Secondly, will you let me recommend the inclosed letter from Wigan, as the groundwork of a capital article, in your way, for "H. W."? There is not the least objection to a plain reference to him, or to Phelps, to whom the same thing happened a year or two ago, near Islington, in the case of a clever and capital little daughter of his. I think it a capital opportunity for a discourse on gentility, with a glance at those other schools which advertise that the "sons of gentlemen only" are admitted, and a just recognition of the greater liberality of our public schools. There are tradesmen's sons at Eton, and Charles Kean was at Eton, and Macready (also an actor's son) was at Rugby. Some such title as "Scholastic Flunkeydom," or anything infinitely contemptuous, would help out the meaning. Surely such a *schoolmaster* must swallow all the silver *forks that the pupils are expected* to take when they come, *and are not expected to* take away with them when they go.

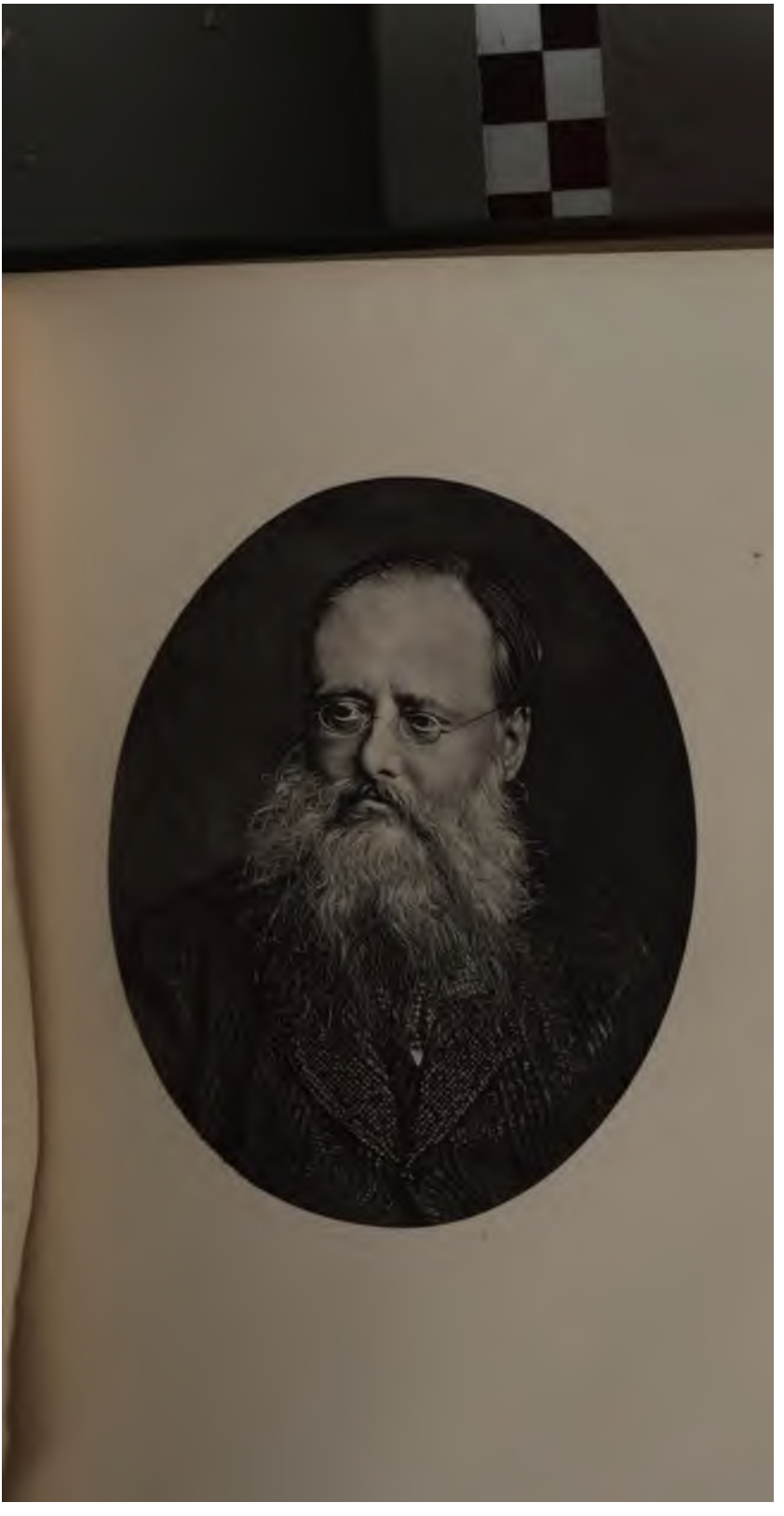
d of course he could not exist, unless he had flunkey cus-
ners by the dozen.

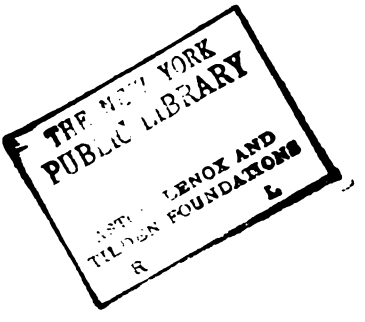
Secondly — no, this is thirdly now — about the Christmas
mber. I have arranged so to stop my readings as to be
ilable for it on *the 15th of November*, which will leave me
e to write a good article, if I clear my way to one. Do you
your way to our making a Christmas number of this idea that
m going very briefly to hint ? Some disappointed person, man
woman, prematurely disgusted with the world, for some reason
no reason (the person should be young, I think) retires to an
lonely house, or an old lonely mill, or anything you like,
h one attendant, resolved to shut out the world, and hold
communion with it. The one attendant sees the absurdity
the idea, pretends to humour it, but really thus to slaughter
Everything that happens, everybody that comes near, every
ath of human interest that floats into the old place from the
age, or the heath, or the four cross-roads near which it
nds, and from which belated travellers stray into it, shows
ond mistake that you can't shut out the world; that you
in it, to be of it; that you get into a false position the
ment you try to sever yourself from it; and that you must



Wilkie Collins



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CCCLXV. MISS MARY BOYLE

STATION HOTEL, YORK, Friday, September 10, 1858.

DEAREST MEERY, — First let me tell you that all the magicians and spirits in your employ have fulfilled the instructions of their wondrous mistress to admiration. Flowers have fallen in my path wherever I have trod; and when they rained upon me at Cork I was more amazed than you ever saw me.

Secondly, receive my hearty and loving thanks for that same. (Excuse a little Irish in the turn of that sentence, but I can't help it.)

Thirdly, I have written direct to Mr. Boddington, explaining that I am bound to be in Edinburgh on the day when he courteously proposes to do me honour.

I really cannot tell you how truly and tenderly I feel your letter, and how gratified I am by its contents. Your truth and attachment are always so precious to me that I can*not* get my heart out on my sleeve to show it you. It is like a child, and, at the sound of some familiar voices, "goes and hides."

You know what an affection I have for Mrs. Watson, and how happy it made me to see her again — younger, much, than when I first knew her in Switzerland.

God bless you always!

Ever affectionately yours.

CCCLXVI. MISS HOGARTH

ROYAL HOTEL, SCARBOROUGH, Sunday, September 11, 1858.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — We had a very fine house indeed at York. All kinds of applications have been made for another reading there, and no doubt it would be exceedingly productive; but it cannot be done. At Harrogate yesterday; the queerest place, with the strangest people in it, leading the oddest lives of dancing, newspaper reading, and tables d'hôte. The piety of York obliging us to leave that place for this at six this morning, and there being no night train from Harrogate, we had to engage a special engine. We got to bed at one, and were up again before five; *which, after* yesterday's fatigues, leaves me a *little worn out at this present.*

I have no accounts of this place as yet, nor have I received

any letter here. But the post of this morning is not yet delivered, I believe. We have a charming room, overlooking the sea. Leech is here (living within a few doors), with the partner of his bosom, and his young family. I write at ten in the morning, having been here two hours; and you will readily suppose that I have not seen him.

Of news, I have not the faintest breath. I seem to have been doing nothing all my life but riding in railway carriages and reading. The railway of the morning brought us through Castle Howard, and under the woods of Easthorpe, and then just below Malton Abbey, where I went to poor Smithson's funeral. It was a most lovely morning, and, tired as I was, I could n't sleep for looking out of window.

Yesterday, at Harrogate, two circumstances occurred which gave Arthur great delight. Firstly, he chafed his legs sore with his black bag of silver. Secondly, the landlord asked him as a favour, "If he could oblige him with a little silver." He obliged him directly with some forty pounds' worth; and I suspect the landlord to have repented of having approached the subject. After the reading last night we walked over the moor

CCCLXVII. MISS DICKENS

Scarborough Arms, Leeds, Wednesday, September 15, 1858.

My dearest Mamie, — I have added a pound to the cheque. I would recommend your seeing the poor railway man again and giving him ten shillings, and telling him to let you see him again in about a week. If he be then still unable to lift weights and handle heavy things, I would then give him another ten shillings, and so on.

Since I wrote to Georgy from Scarborough, we have had, thank God, nothing but success. The Hull people (not generally considered excitable, even on their own showing) were so enthusiastic, that we were obliged to promise to go back there for two readings. I have positively resolved not to lengthen out the time of my tour, so we are now arranging to drop some small places, and substitute Hull again and York again. But you will perhaps have heard this in the main from Arthur. I know he wrote to you after the reading last night. This place I have always doubted, knowing that we should come here when it was recovering from the double excitement of the festival and the Queen. But there is a very large hall let indeed, and the prospect of to-night consequently looks bright.

Arthur told you, I suppose, that he had his shirt-front and waistcoat torn off last night? He was perfectly enraptured in consequence. Our men got so knocked about that he gave them five shillings apiece on the spot. John passed several minutes upside down against a wall, with his head amongst the people's boots. He came out of the difficulty in an exceedingly tousled condition, and with his face much flushed. For all this, and their being packed as you may conceive they would be packed, they settled down the instant I went in, and never wavered in the closest attention for an instant. It was a very high room, and required a great effort.

Oddly enough, I slept in this house three days last year with Wilkie. Arthur has the bedroom I occupied then, and I have one two doors from it, and Gordon has the one between. Not only is he still with us, but he *has* talked of going on to Manchester, going on to *London*, and coming back with us to Darlington *next Tuesday!!!*

These streets look like a great circus with the season just

finished. All sorts of garish triumphal arches were put up for the Queen, and they have got smoky, and have been looked out of countenance by the sun, and are blistered and patchy, and half up and half down, and are hideous to behold. Spiritless men (evidently drunk for some time in the royal honour) are slowly removing them, and on the whole it is more like the clearing away of "The Frozen Deep" at Tavistock House than anything within your knowledge — with the exception that we are not in the least sorry, as we were then. Vague ideas are in Arthur's head that when we come back to Hull, we are to come here, and are to have the Town Hall (a beautiful building), and read to the million. I can't say yet. That depends. I remember that when I was here before (I came from Rockingham to make a speech), I thought them a dull and slow audience. I hope I may have been mistaken. I never saw better audiences than the Yorkshire audiences generally.

I am so perpetually at work or asleep, that I have not a scrap of news. I saw the Leech family at Scarboro', both in my own house (that is to say, hotel) and in theirs. They were not at either reading. Scarboro' is gay and pretty, and I think Gordon had an idea that we were always at some such place

obliged to get great bills out, signifying that no more can be sold. It will be by no means easy to get into the place the numbers who have already paid. It is the hall we acted in. Crammed to the roof and the passages. We must come back here towards the end of October, and are again altering the list and striking out small places.

The trains are so strange and unintelligible in this part of the country that we were obliged to leave Halifax at eight this morning, and breakfast on the road — at Huddersfield again, where we had an hour's wait. Wills was in attendance on the platform, and took me (here at Sheffield, I mean) out to Frederick Lehmann's house to see Mrs. Wills. She looked pretty much the same as ever, I thought, and was taking care of a very pretty little boy. The house and grounds are as nice as anything *can* be in this smoke. A heavy thunderstorm is passing over the town, and it is raining hard too.

This is a stupid letter, my dearest Georgy, but I write in a hurry, and in the thunder and lightning, and with the crowd of to-night before me. Ever most affectionately.

CCCLXIX. MISS HOGARTH

STATION HOTEL, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,
Sunday, September 26, 1858.

EXTRACT.

The girls (as I have no doubt they have already told you for themselves) arrived here in good time yesterday, and in very fresh condition. They persisted in going to the room last night, though I had arranged for their remaining quiet.

We have done a vast deal here. I suppose you know that we are going to Berwick, and that we mean to sleep there and go on to Edinburgh on Monday morning, arriving there before noon? If it be as fine to-morrow as it is to-day, the girls will see the coast piece of railway between Berwick and Edinburgh to great advantage. I was anxious that they should, because that kind of pleasure is really almost the only one they are likely to have in their present trip.

Stanfield and Roberts are in Edinburgh, and the Scottish Royal Academy gave them a dinner on Wednesday, to which I was very *pressingly invited*. But, of course, my going was *impossible*. *I read twice that day.*

Remembering what you do of Sunderland, you will be surprised that our profit there was very considerable. I read in a beautiful new theatre, and (I thought to myself) quite wonderfully. Such an audience I never beheld for rapidity and enthusiasm. The room in which we acted (converted into a theatre afterwards) was burnt to the ground a year or two ago. We found the hotel, so bad in our time, really good. I walked from Durham to Sunderland, and from Sunderland to Newcastle.

Don't you think, as we shall be at home at eleven in the forenoon this day fortnight, that it will be best for you and Plornish to come to Tavistock House for that Sunday, and for us all to go down to Gad's Hill next day? My best love to the noble Plornish. If he is quite reconciled to the postponement of his trousers, I should like to behold his first appearance in them. But if not, as he is such a good fellow, I think it would be a pity to disappoint and try him.

And now, my dearest Georgy, I think I have said all I have to say before I go out for a little air. I had a very hard day yesterday, and am tired.

Ever your most affectionate

As to the mere effect, of course I don't go on doing the thing so often without carefully observing myself and the people too in every little thing, and without (in consequence) greatly improving in it.

At Aberdeen, we were crammed to the street twice in one day. At Perth (where I thought when I arrived there literally could be nobody to come), the nobility came posting in from thirty miles round, and the whole town came and filled an immense hall. As to the effect, if you had seen them after Lilian died in "The Chimes," or when Scrooge woke and talked to the boy outside the window, I doubt if you would ever have forgotten it. And at the end of "Dombey" yesterday afternoon, in the cold light of day, they all got up, after a short pause, gentle and simple, and thundered and waved their hats with that astonishing heartiness and fondness for me, that for the first time in all my public career they took me completely off my legs, and I saw the whole eighteen hundred of them reel on one side as if a shock from without had shaken the hall.

The dear girls have enjoyed themselves immensely, and their trip has been a great success. I hope I told you (but I forget whether I did or no) how splendidly Newcastle [1] came out. I am reminded of Newcastle at the moment because they joined me there.

I am anxious to get to the end of my readings, and to be at home again, and able to sit down and think in my own study. But the fatigue, though sometimes very great indeed, hardly tells upon me at all. And although all our people, from Smith downwards, have given in, more or less, at times, I have never been in the least unequal to the work, though sometimes sufficiently disinclined for it. My kindest and best love to Mrs. Forster. Ever affectionately.

CCCLXXI. MISS DICKENS

Royal Hotel, Derby, Friday, October 22, 1858.

My dearest Mamie, — I am writing in a very poor condition; I have a bad cold all over me, pains in my back and limbs, and a very sensitive and uncomfortable throat. There was a great draught *up some stone steps* near me last night, and *I dare say that caused it.*

[1] *The birthplace of* Mr. Forster.

The weather on my first two nights at Birmingham was so intolerably bad — it blew hard, and never left off raining for one single moment — that the houses were not what they otherwise would have been. On the last night the weather cleared, and we had a grand house.

Last night at Nottingham was almost, if not quite, the most amazing we have had. It is not a very large place, and the room is by no means a very large one, but three hundred and twenty stalls were let, and all the other tickets were sold.

Here we have two hundred and twenty stalls let for to-night, and the other tickets are gone in proportion. It is a pretty room, but not large.

I have just been saying to Arthur that if there is not a large let for York, I would rather give it up, and get Monday at Gad's Hill. We have telegraphed to know. If the answer comes (as I suppose it will) before post-time, I will tell you in a postscript what we decide to do. Coming to London in the night of to-morrow (Saturday), and having to see Mr. Ouvry on Sunday, and having to start for York early on Monday, I fear I should not be able to get to Gad's Hill at all. You won't expect me till you see me.

They are represented as the dullest and worst of audiences. I found them very good indeed, even in the morning.

There awaited me at the hotel, a letter from the Rev. Mr. Young, Wentworth Watson's tutor, saying that Mrs. Watson wished her boy to shake hands with me, and that he would bring him in the evening. I expected him at the hotel before the readings. But he did not come. He spoke to John about it in the room at night. The crowd and confusion, however, were very great, and I saw nothing of him. In his letter he said that Mrs. Watson was at Paris on her way home, and would be at Brighton at the end of this week. I suppose I shall see her there at the end of next week.

We find a let of two hundred stalls here, which is very large for this place. The evening being fine too, and blue being to be seen in the sky beyond the smoke, we expect to have a very full hall. Tell Mamey and Katey that if they had been with us on the railway to-day between Leamington and this place, they would have seen (though it is only an hour and ten minutes by the express) fires and smoke indeed. We came through a part of the Black Country that you know, and it looked at its blackest. All the furnaces seemed in full blast, and all the coal-pits to be working.

It is market-day here, and the ironmasters are standing out in the street (where they always hold high change), making such an iron hum and buzz, that they confuse me horribly. In addition, there is a bell-man announcing something — not the readings, I beg to say — and there is an excavation being made in the centre of the open place, for a statue, or a pump, or a lamp-post, or something or other, round which all the Wolverhampton boys are yelling and struggling.

And here is Arthur, begging to have dinner at half-past three instead of four, because he foresees "a wiry evening" in store for him. Under which complication of distractions, to which a waitress with a tray at this moment adds herself, I sink, and leave off.

My best love to the dear girls, and to the noble Plorn, and to you. Marguerite and Ellen Stone not forgotten. All yesterday and to-day I have been doing everything to the tune of: —

And the day is dark and dreary.

Ever, dearest Georgy,
Your most affectionate and faithful.

P. S. — I hope the brazier is intolerably hot, and half stifles all the family. Then, and not otherwise, I shall think it is satisfactory work.

CCCLXXIII. REV. JAMES WHITE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,
Friday, November 5, 1858.

MY DEAR WHITE, — May I entreat you to thank Mr. Carter very earnestly and kindly in my name, for his proffered hospitality; and, further, to explain to him that since my readings began, I have known them to be incompatible with all social enjoyments, and have neither set foot in a friend's house nor sat down to a friend's table in any one of all the many places I have been to, but have rigidly kept myself to my hotels. To this resolution I must hold until the last. There is not the least virtue in it. It is a matter of stern necessity, and I submit with the worst grace possible.

Will you let me know, either at Southampton or Portsmouth, whether any of you, and how many of you, if any, are coming over, so that Arthur Smith may reserve good seats?

Christian world arises (as I take it) from a stubborn determination to refuse the New Testament as a sufficient guide in itself, and to force the Old Testament into alliance with it — whereof comes all manner of camel-swallowing and of gnat-straining. But so to resent this miserable error, or to (by any implication) depreciate the divine goodness and beauty of the New Testament, is to commit even a worse error. And to class Jesus Christ with Mahomet is simply audacity and folly. I might as well hoist myself on to a high platform, to inform my disciples that the lives of King George the Fourth and of King Alfred the Great belonged to one and the same category.

Ever affectionately.

CCCLXXV. B. W. PROCTER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday, December 18, 1858.

MY DEAR PROCTER, — A thousand thanks for the little song. I am charmed with it, and shall be delighted to brighten "Household Words" with such a wise and genial light. I no more believe that your poetical faculty has gone by, than I believe that you have yourself passed to the better land. You and it will travel thither in company, rely upon it. So I still hope to hear more of the trade-songs, and to learn that the blacksmith has hammered out no end of iron into good fashion of verse, like a cunning workman, as I know him of old to be.

Very faithfully yours, my dear Procter.

CCCLXXVI. W. P. FRITH, R. A.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,
Wednesday, 12th January, 1859.

MY DEAR FRITH, — At eleven on Monday morning next, the gifted individual whom you will transmit to posterity [1] will be at Watkins's. Table also shall be there, and chair. Velvet coat likewise if the tailor should have sent it home. But the garment is more to be doubted than the man whose signature here follows.

Faithfully yours always.

[1] *The portrait by Mr. Frith is now in the Forster Collection, at the South Kensington Museum.*

CCCLXXVII. ARTHUR SMITH

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W. C.,
Wednesday, January 26, 1859.

MY DEAR ARTHUR, — Will you first read the inclosed letters, having previously welcomed, with all possible cordiality, the bearer, Mr. Thomas C. Evans, from New York?

You having read them, let me explain that Mr. Fields is a highly respectable and influential man, one of the heads of the most classical and most respected publishing house in America; that Mr. Richard Grant White is a man of high reputation; and that Felton is the Greek Professor in their Cambridge University, perhaps the most distinguished scholar in the States.

The address to myself, referred to in one of the letters, being on its way, it is quite clear that I must give some decided and definite answer to the American proposal. Now, will you carefully discuss it with Mr. Evans before I enter on it at all? Then, will you dine here with him on Sunday — which I will propose to him — and arrange to meet at half-past four for an hour's discussion.

with my two girls and their aunt) much excited and pleased by your account of your daughter's engagement. Apart from the high sense I have of the affectionate confidence with which you tell me what lies so tenderly on your own heart, I have followed the little history with a lively sympathy and regard for her. I hope, with you, that it is full of promise, and that you will all be happy in it. The separation, even in the present condition of travel (and no man can say how much the discovery of a day may advance it), is nothing. And so God bless her and all of you, and may the rosy summer bring her all the fulness of joy that we all wish her.

To pass from the altar to Townshend (which is a long way), let me report him severely treated by Bully, who rules him with a paw of iron; and complaining, moreover, of indigestion. He drives here every Sunday, but at all other times is mostly shut up in his beautiful house, where I occasionally go and dine with him *tête-à-tête*, and where we always talk of you and drink to you. That is a rule with us from which we never depart. He is "seeing a volume of poems through the press;" rather an expensive amusement. He has not been out at night (except to this house) save last Friday, when he went to hear me read "The Poor Traveller," "Mrs. Gamp," and "The Trial" from "Pickwick." He came into my room at St. Martin's Hall, and I fortified him with weak brandy and water. You will be glad to hear that the said readings are a greater *furore* than they ever have been, and that every night on which they now take place — once a week — hundreds go away, unable to get in, though the hall holds thirteen hundred people. I dine with —— to-day, by the bye, along with his agent; concerning whom I observe him to be always divided between an unbounded confidence and a little latent suspicion. He always tells me that he is a gem of the first water; oh, yes, the best of business men! and then says that he did not quite like his conduct respecting that farm-tenant and those hay-ricks.

There is a general impression here, among the best informed, that war in Italy, to begin with, is inevitable, and will break out before April. I know a gentleman at Genoa (Swiss by birth), deeply in with the authorities at Turin, who is already sending children home.

In England we are quiet enough. There is a world of talk, *as you know, about Reform bills*; but I don't believe there is

any general strong feeling on the subject. According to my perceptions, it is undeniable that the public has fallen into a state of indifference about public affairs, mainly referable, as I think, to the people who administer them — and there I mean the people of all parties — which is a very bad sign of the times. The general mind seems weary of debates and honourable members, and to have taken *laissez-aller* for its motto.

My affairs domestic (which I know are not without their interest for you) flow peacefully. My eldest daughter is a capital housekeeper, heads the table gracefully, delegates certain appropriate duties to her sister and her aunt, and they are all three devotedly attached. Charley, my eldest boy, remains in Barings' house. Your present correspondent is more popular than he ever has been. I rather think that the readings in the country have opened up a new public who were outside before; but however that may be, his books have a wider range than they ever had, and his public welcomes are prodigious. Said correspondent is at present overwhelmed with proposals to go and read in America. Will never go, unless a small fortune be first paid down in money on this side of the Atlantic. Stated the figure of such payment between ourselves only yesterday

CCCLXXIX. ANTONIO PANIZZI

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday Night, March 14, 1859.

MY DEAR PANIZZI, — If you should feel no delicacy in mentioning, or should see no objection to mentioning, to Signor Poerio, or any of the wronged Neapolitan gentlemen to whom it is your happiness and honour to be a friend on their arrival in this country, an idea that has occurred to me, I should regard it as a great kindness in you if you would be my exponent. I think you will have no difficulty in believing that I would not, on any consideration, obtrude my name or projects upon any one of those noble souls, if there were any reason of the slightest kind against it. And if you see any such reason, I pray you instantly to banish my letter from your thoughts.

It seems to me probable that some narrative of their ten years' suffering will, somehow or other, sooner or later, be by some of them laid before the English people. The just interest and indignation alive here will (I suppose) elicit it. False narratives and garbled stories will, in any case, of a certainty get about. If the true history of the matter is to be told, I have that sympathy with them and respect for them which would, all other considerations apart, render it unspeakably gratifying to me to be the means of its diffusion. What I desire to lay before them is simply this. If for my new successor to "Household Words" a narrative of their ten years' trial could be written, I would take any conceivable pains to have it rendered into English, and presented in the sincerest and best way to a very large and comprehensive audience. It should be published exactly as you might think best for them, and remunerated in any way that you might think generous and right. They want no mouthpiece and no introducer, but perhaps they might have no objection to be associated with an English writer, who is possibly not unknown to them by some general reputation, and who certainly would be animated by a strong public and private respect for their honour, spirit, and unmerited misfortunes. This is the whole matter; assuming that such a thing is to be done, I long for the privilege of helping to *do it. These gentlemen* might consider it an *independent means of making* money, and I should be delighted to *pay the money.*

In my absence from town, my friend and sub-editor, Mr. Wills (to whom I had expressed my feeling on the subject), has seen, I think, three of the gentlemen together. But as I hear, returning home to-night, that they are in your good hands, and as nobody can be a better judge than you of anything that concerns them, I at once decide to write to you and to take no other step whatever. Forgive me for the trouble I have occasioned you in the reading of this letter, and never think of it again if you think that by pursuing it you would cause them an instant's uneasiness.

Believe me, very faithfully yours.

CCCLXXX. B. W. PROCTER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Saturday, March 19, 1859.

MY DEAR PROCTER, — I think the songs are simply ADMIRABLE! and I have no doubt of this being a popular feature in "All the Year Round." I would not omit the sexton, and I would not omit the spinners and weavers; and I would omit the hack-writers, and (I think) the alderman; but

is the great landmark of the whole neighbourhood. Captain Goldsmith's *house* is up a lane considerably off the high-road; but he has a garden *wall* abutting on the road itself.

2. "The Pic-Nic Papers" were originally sold to Colburn, for the benefit of the widow of Mr. Macrone, of St. James's Square, publisher, deceased. Two volumes were contributed — of course gratuitously — by writers who had had transactions with Macrone. Mr. Colburn, wanting three volumes in all for trade purposes, added a third, consisting of an American reprint. Of that volume I did n't know, and don't know, anything. The other two I edited, gratuitously as aforesaid, and wrote the "Lamplighter's Story" in. It was all done many years ago. There was a preface originally, delicately setting forth how the book came to be.

3. I suppose —— to be, as Mr. Samuel Weller expresses it somewhere in "Pickwick," "ravin' mad with the consciousness o' willany." Under their advertisement in the "Times" to-day, you will see, without a word of comment, the shorthand writer's verbatim report of the judgment.

Ever faithfully.

CCCLXXXII. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, London, W. C.,
Tuesday, May 31, 1859.

My dear Mrs. Watson, — You surprise me by supposing that there is ever latent a defiant and roused expression in the undersigned lamb! Apart from this singular delusion of yours, and wholly unaccountable departure from your usual accuracy in all things, your satisfaction with the portrait is a great pleasure to me. It has received every conceivable pains at Frith's hands, and ought on his account to be good. It is a little too much (to my thinking) as if my next-door neighbour were my deadly foe, uninsured, and I had just received tidings of his house being afire; otherwise very good.

I cannot tell you how delighted we shall be if you would come to Gad's Hill. You should see some charming woods and a rare old castle, and you should have such a snug room looking over a *Kentish prospect*, with every facility in it for *pondering on the beauties of its* master's beard! Do come, but *you positively must not* come and go on the same day.

We retreat there on Monday, and shall be there all the summer.

My small boy is perfectly happy at Southsea, and likes the school very much. I had the finest letter two or three days ago, from another of my boys — Frank Jeffrey — at Hamburg. In this wonderful epistle he says: "Dear papa, I write to tell you that I have given up all thoughts of being a doctor. My conviction that I shall never get over my stammering is the cause; all professions are barred against me. The only thing I should like to be is a gentleman farmer, either at the Cape, in Canada, or Australia. With my passage paid, fifteen pounds, a horse, and a rifle, I could go two or three hundred miles up country, sow grain, buy cattle, and in time be very comfortable."

Considering the consequences of executing the little commission by the next steamer, I perceived that the first consequence of the fifteen pounds would be that he would be robbed of it — of the horse, that it would throw him — and of the rifle, that it would blow his head off; which probabilities I took the liberty of mentioning, as being against the scheme. With best love from all,

Ever believe me, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Your faithful and affectionate.

CCCLXXXIII. MRS. WHITE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday, June 5, 1859.

MY DEAR MRS. WHITE, — I do not write to you this morning because I have anything to say — I well know where your consolation is set, and to what beneficent figure your thoughts are raised — but simply because you are so much in my mind that it is a relief to send you and dear White my love. You are always in our hearts and on our lips. May the great God comfort you! You know that Mary and Katie are coming on Thursday. They will bring dear Lotty what she little needs with you by her side — love; and I hope their company will interest and please her. There is nothing that they, or any of us, would not do for her. She is a part of us all, and has belonged to us, as well as to you, these many years.

Ever your affectionate and faithful.

CCCLXXXIV. MISS DICKENS

GAD'S HILL, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, June 11, 1859.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — On Saturday night I found, very much to my surprise and pleasure, the photograph on my table at Tavistock House. It is not a very pleasant or cheerful presentation of my daughters; but it is wonderfully like for all that, and in some details remarkably good. When I came home here yesterday I tried it in the large Townshend stereoscope, in which it shows to great advantage. It is in the little stereoscope at present on the drawing-room table. One of the balustrades of the destroyed old Rochester bridge has been (very nicely) presented to me by the contractor for the works, and has been duly stonemasoned and set up on the lawn behind the house. I have ordered a sun-dial for the top of it, and it will be a very good object indeed. The Plorn is highly excited to-day by reason of an institution which he tells me (after questioning George) is called the "Cobb, or Bodderin," holding a festival at The Falstaff. He is possessed of some vague information that they go to Higham Church, in pursuance of some old usage, and attend service there, and afterwards march round the village. It so far looks probable that they certainly started off at eleven very spare in numbers, and came back considerably recruited, which looks to me like the difference between going to church and coming to dinner. They bore no end of bright banners and broad sashes, and had a band with a terrific drum, and are now (at half-past two) dining at The Falstaff, partly in the side room on the ground floor, and partly in a tent improvised this morning. The drum is hung up to a tree in The Falstaff garden, and looks like a tropical sort of gourd. I have presented the band with five shillings, which munificence has been highly appreciated. Ices don't seem to be provided for the ladies in the gallery — I mean the garden; they are prowling about there, endeavouring to peep in at the beef and mutton through the holes in the tent, on the whole, in a debased and degraded manner.

Turk *somehow cut his foot in* Cobham Lanes yesterday, and *Linda hers. They are both* lame, and looking at each other. *Fancy Mr. Townshend not* intending to go for another three

weeks, and designing to come down here for a few days — with Henry and Bully — on Wednesday! I wish you could have seen him alone with me on Saturday; he was so extraordinarily earnest and affectionate on my belongings and affairs in general, and not least of all on you and Katie, that he cried in a most pathetic manner, and was so affected that I was obliged to leave him among the flower-pots in the long passage at the end of the dining-room. It was a very good piece of truthfulness and sincerity, especially in one of his years, able to take life so easily.

Mr. and Mrs. Wills are here now (but I dare say you know it from your aunt), and return to town with me to-morrow morning. We are now going on to the castle. Mrs. Wills was very droll last night, and told me some good stories. My dear, I wish particularly to impress upon you and dear Katie (to whom I send my other best love) that I hope your stay will not be very long. I don't think it very good for either of you, though of course I know that Lotty will be, and must be, and should be the first consideration with you both. I am very anxious to know how you found her and how you are yourself.

Best love to dear Lotty and Mrs. White. The same to Mr. White and Clara. We are always talking about you all.

Ever, dearest Mamie, your affectionate father.

CCCLXXXV. REV. JAMES WHITE

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Thursday, July 7, 1859.

MY DEAR WHITE, — I send my heartiest and most affectionate love to Mrs. White and you, and to Clara. You know all that I could add; you have felt it all; let it be unspoken and unwritten — it is expressed with us.

Do you not think that you could all three come here, and stay with us? You and Mrs. White should have your own large room and your own ways, and should be among us when you felt disposed, and never otherwise. I do hope you would find peace here. Can it not be done?

We have talked very much about it among ourselves, and the girls are strong upon it. Think of it — do!

Ever your affectionate.

CCCLXXXVI. MRS. COWDEN CLARKE

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,
August 21, 1859.

MY DEAR MRS. COWDEN CLARKE, — I cannot tell you how much pleasure I have derived from the receipt of your earnest letter. Do not suppose it possible that such praise can be "less than nothing" to your old manager. It is more than all else.

Here in my little country-house on the summit of the hill where Falstaff did the robbery, your words have come to me in the most appropriate and delightful manner. When the story can be read all at once, and my meaning can be better seen, I will send it to you (sending it to Dean Street, if you tell me of no better way), and it will be a hearty gratification to think that you and your good husband are reading it together. For you must both take notice, please, that I have a reminder of you always before me. On my desk, here, stand two green leaves[1] which I every morning station in their ever-green place at my elbow. The leaves on the oak-trees outside the window are less constant than these, for they are with me through the four seasons.

Lord! to think of the bygone day when you were stricken mute (was it not at Glasgow?) and, being mounted on a tall ladder at a practicable window, stared at Forster, and with a noble constancy refused to utter a word! Like the Monk among the pictures with Wilkie, I begin to think *that* the real world, and this the sham that goes out with the lights.

God bless you both. Ever faithfully yours.

CCCLXXXVII. JOHN FORSTER

GAD'S HILL, Thursday Night, August 25, 1859.

MY DEAR FORSTER, — Heartily glad to get your letter this morning.

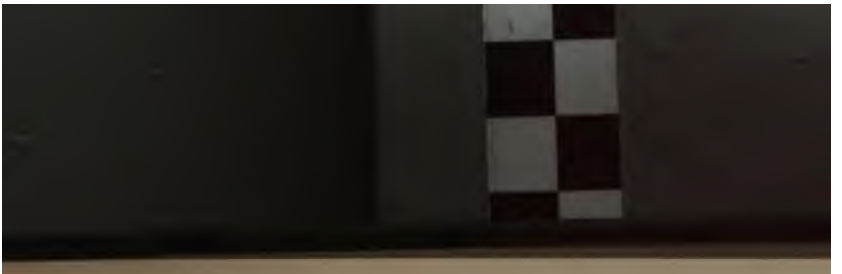
I cannot easily tell you how much interested I am by what you tell me of our brave and excellent friend the Chief Baron, in connection with *that ruffian*. I followed the case with so

[1] *A porcelain paper-weight with* two green leaves enamelled on it, between *which were placed the initials C. D.* A present from Mrs. C. Clarke.

much interest, and have followed the miserable knaves and asses who have perverted it since, with so much indignation, that I have often had more than half a mind to write and thank the upright judge who tried him. I declare to God that I believe such a service one of the greatest that a man of intellect and courage can render to society. Of course I saw the beast of a prisoner (with my mind's eye) delivering his cut-and-dried speech, and read in every word of it that no one but the murderer could have delivered or conceived it. Of course I have been driving the girls out of their wits here, by incessantly proclaiming that there needed no medical evidence either way, and that the case was plain without it. Lastly, of course (though a merciful man — because a merciful man I mean), I would hang any Home Secretary (Whig, Tory, Radical, or otherwise) who should step in between that black scoundrel and the gallows. I cannot believe — and my belief in all wrong as to public matters is enormous — that such a thing will be done.

I am reminded of Tennyson, by thinking that King Arthur would have made short work of the amiable ——, whom the newspapers strangely delight to make a sort of gentleman of. How fine the "Idylls" are! Lord! what a blessed thing it is to read a man who can write! I thought nothing could be grander than the first poem till I came to the third; but when I had read the last, it seemed to be absolutely unapproached and unapproachable.

To come to myself. I have written and begged the "All the Year Round" publisher to send you directly four weeks' proofs beyond the current number, that are in type. I hope you will like them. Nothing but the interest of the subject, and the pleasure of striving with the difficulty of the forms of treatment, nothing in the mere way of money, I mean, could also repay the time and trouble of the incessant condensation. But I set myself the little task of making a *picturesque* story, rising in every chapter with characters true to nature, but whom the story itself should express, more than they should express themselves, by dialogue. I mean, in other words, that I fancied a story of incident might be written, in place of the bestiality that *is* written under that pretence, pounding the characters out in its own mortar, and beating their own interests out of them. If you could have read the story all at once, I hope you would n't have stopped halfway.



As to coming to your retreat, my dear Forster, think how helpless I am. I am not well yet. I have an instinctive feeling that nothing but the sea will restore me, and I am planning to go and work at Ballard's, at Broadstairs, from next Wednesday to Monday. I generally go to town on Monday afternoon. All Tuesday I am at the office, on Wednesday I come back here, and go to work again. I don't leave off till Monday comes round once more. I am fighting to get my story done by the first week in October. On the 10th of October I am going away to read for a fortnight at Ipswich, Norwich, Oxford, Cambridge, and a few other places. Judge what my spare time is just now!

I am very much surprised and very sorry to find from the inclosed that Elliotson has been ill. I never heard a word of it.

Georgy sends best love to you and to Mrs. Forster, so do I, so does Plorn, so does Frank. The girls are, for five days, with the Whites at Ramsgate. It is raining, intensely hot, and stormy. Eighteen creatures, like little tortoises, have dashed in at the window and fallen on the paper since I began this paragraph ● (that was one!). I am a wretched sort of creature in my way, but it is a way that gets on somehow. And all ways have the same finger-post at the head of them, and at every turning in them.

Ever affectionately.

CCCLXXXVIII. MISS DICKENS AND MISS KATIE DICKENS

ALBION, BROADSTAIRS, Friday, September 2, 1859.

MY DEAREST MAMIE AND KATIE, — I have been "moved" here, and am now (Ballard having added to the hotel a house we lived in three years) in our old dining-room and sitting-room, and our old drawing-room as a bedroom. My cold is so bad, both in my throat and my chest, that I can't bathe in the sea; Tom Collin dissuaded me — thought it "bad" — but I get a heavy shower-bath at Mrs. Crampton's every morning. The baths are still hers and her husband's, but they have retired and live in "Nuckells" — are going to give a stained-glass window, value three hundred pounds, to St. Peter's Church. Tom *Collin is of opinion that the* Miss Dickenses has growed *two fine young women — leastwise*, asking pardon, ladies. An

evangelical family of most disagreeable girls prowl about here and trip people up with tracts, which they put in the paths with stones upon them to keep them from blowing away. Charles Collins and I having seen a bill yesterday — about a mesmeric young lady who did feats, one of which was set forth in the bill, in a line by itself, as

THE RIGID LEGS

— were overpowered with curiosity, and resolved to go. It came off in the Assembly-Room, now more exquisitely desolate than words can describe. Eighteen shillings was the "take." Behind a screen among the company, we heard mysterious gurglings of water before the entertainment began, and then a slippery sound which occasioned me to whisper C. C. (who laughed in the most ridiculous manner), "Soap." It proved to be the young lady washing herself. She must have been wonderfully dirty, for she took a world of trouble, and did n't come out clean after all — in a wretched dirty muslin frock, with blue ribbons. She was the alleged mesmeriser, and a boy who distributed bills the alleged mesmerised. It was a most preposterous imposition, but more ludicrous than any poor sight I ever saw. The boy is clearly out of pantomime, and, when he pretended to be in the mesmeric state, made the company back by going in among them head over heels, backwards, half a dozen times, in a most insupportable way. The pianist had struck; and the manner in which the lecturer implored "some lady" to play a "polker," and the manner in which no lady would; and in which the few ladies who were there sat with their hats on, and the elastic under their chins, as if it were going to blow, is never to be forgotten. I have been writing all the morning, and am going for a walk to Ramsgate. This is a beast of a letter, but I am not well, and have been addling my head.

Ever, dear girls, your affectionate father.

CCCLXXXIX. WILKIE COLLINS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday Night, September 16, 1859.

MY DEAR WILKIE, — Just a word to say that I have received yours, and that I look forward to the reunion on Thursday, when I hope to have the satisfaction of recounting to you

the plot of a play that has been laid before me for commending advice.

Ditto to what you say respecting the Great Eastern. I went right up to London Bridge by the boat that day, on purpose that I might pass her. I thought her the ugliest and most unshiplike thing these eyes ever beheld. I would n't go to sea in her, shiver my ould timbers and rouse me up with a monkey's tail (man-of-war metaphor), not to chuck a biscuit into Davy Jones's weather eye, and see double with my own old toplights.

Turk has been so good as to produce from his mouth, for the wholesome consternation of the family, eighteen feet of worm. When he had brought it up, he seemed to think it might be turned to account in the housekeeping, and was proud. Pony has kicked a shaft off the cart, and is to be sold. Why don't you buy her? she 'd never kick with you.

Barber's opinion is, that them fruit-trees, one and all, is touchwood, and not fit for burning at any gentleman's fire; also that the stocking of this here garden is worth less than nothing, because you would n't have to grub up nothing, and something takes a man to do it at three-and-sixpence a day. Was "left desponding" by your reporter.

I have had immense difficulty to find a man for the stable-yard here. Barber having at last engaged one this morning, I inquired if he had a decent hat for driving in, to which Barber returned this answer: —

"Why, sir, not to deceive you, that man flatly say that he never have wore that article since man he was!"

I am consequently fortified into my room, and am afraid to go out to look at him. Love from all.

Ever affectionately.

CCCXC. MONSIEUR REGNIER

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Saturday, October 15, 1859.

MY DEAR REGNIER, — You will receive by railway parcel the proof-sheets of a story of mine, that has been for some time in progress in my weekly journal, and that will be published in a complete volume about the *middle* of November. Nobody but Forster *has yet seen the latter portions* of it, or will see them *until they are published.* I want you to read it for two reasons.

Firstly, because I hope it is the best story I have written. Secondly, because it treats of a very remarkable time in France; and I should very much like to know what you think of its being dramatised for a French theatre. If you should think it likely to be done, I should be glad to take some steps towards having it well done. The story is an extraordinary success here, and I think the end of it is certain to make a still greater sensation.

Don't trouble yourself to write to me, *mon ami*, until you shall have had time to read the proofs. Remember, they are *proofs*, and *private;* the latter chapters will not be before the public for five or six weeks to come.

With kind regards to Madame Regnier, in which my daughters and their aunt unite,

Believe me, ever faithfully yours.

P. S. — The story (I dare say you have not seen any of it yet) is called "A Tale of Two Cities."

CCCXCI. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

This is a place which — except the cathedral, with the loveliest front I ever saw — is like the back door to some other place. It is, I should hope, the deadest and most utterly inert little town in the British dominions. The magnates have taken places, and the bookseller is of opinion that "such is the determination to do honour to Mr. Dickens, that the doors *must* be opened half an hour before the appointed time." You will picture to yourself Arthur's quiet indignation at this, and the manner in which he remarked to me at dinner, "that he turned away twice Peterborough last night."

A very pretty room — though a Corn Exchange — and a room we should have been glad of at Cambridge, as it is large, bright, and cheerful, and wonderfully well lighted.

The difficulty of getting to Bradford from here to-morrow, at any time convenient to us, turned out to be so great, that we are all going in for Leeds (only three quarters of an hour from Bradford) to-night after the reading, at a quarter past eleven. We are due at Leeds a quarter before three.

So no more at present from,

Yours affectionately.

CCCXCII. MONSIEUR REGNIER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W. C.,
Wednesday, November 16, 1859.

MY DEAR REGNIER, — I send you ten thousand thanks for your kind and explicit letter. What I particularly wished to ascertain from you was, whether it is likely the Censor would allow such a piece to be played in Paris. In the case of its being likely, then I wished to have the piece as well done as possible, and would even have proposed to come to Paris to see it rehearsed. But I very much doubted whether the general subject would not be objectionable to the Government, and what you write with so much sagacity and with such care convinces me at once that its representation would be prohibited. Therefore I altogether abandon and relinquish the idea. But I am just as heartily and cordially obliged to you for your interest and friendship, as if the book had been turned into a play five hundred times. I again thank you ten thousand times, and am *quite sure that you are right*. I only hope you will forgive *my causing you so much trouble*, after your hard work.

My girls and Georgina send their kindest regards to Madame Regnier and to you. My Gad's Hill house (I think I omitted to tell you, in reply to your inquiry) is on the very scene of Falstaff's robbery. There is a little *cabaret* at the roadside, still called The Sir John Falstaff. And the country, in all its general features, is at this time what it was in Shakespeare's. I hope you will see the house before long. It is really a pretty place, and a good residence for an English writer, is it not?

Macready, we are all happy to hear from himself, is going to leave the dreary tomb in which he lives, at Sherborne, and to remove to Cheltenham, a large and handsome place, about four or five hours' railway journey from London, where his poor girls will at least see and hear some life. Madame Céleste was with me yesterday, wishing to dramatise "A Tale of Two Cities" for the Lyceum, after bringing out the Christmas pantomime. I gave her my permission and the book; but I fear that her company (troupe) is a very poor one.

This is all the news I have, except (which is no news at all) that I feel as if I had not seen you for fifty years, and that

I am ever your attached and faithful friend.

CCCXCIV. W. C. MACREADY

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, January 2, 1860.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — A happy New Year to you, and many happy years! I cannot tell you how delighted I was to receive your Christmas letter, or with what pleasure I have received Forster's emphatic accounts of your health and spirits. But when was I ever wrong? And when did I not tell you that you were an impostor in pretending to grow older as the rest of us do, and that you had a secret of your own for reversing the usual process! It happened that I read at Cheltenham a couple of months ago, and that I have rarely seen a place that so attracted my fancy. I had never seen it before. Also I believe the character of its people to have greatly changed for the better. All sorts of long-visaged prophets had told me that they were dull, stolid, slow, and I don't know what more that is disagreeable. I found them exactly the reverse in all respects; and I saw an amount of beauty there — well — that is not to be more specifically mentioned to you young fellows.

Katie dined with us yesterday, looking wonderfully well, and singing "Excelsior" with a certain dramatic fire in her, whereof I seem to remember having seen sparks afore now. Etc., etc., etc.

With kindest love from all at home to all with you,

Ever, my dear Macready, your most affectionate.

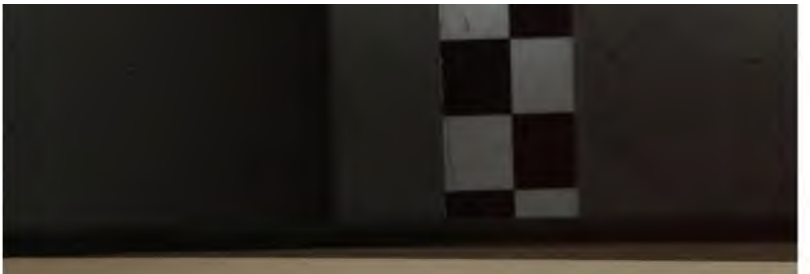
CCCXCV. WILKIE COLLINS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE. TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W. C.,
Saturday Night, January 7, 1860.

MY DEAR WILKIE, — I have read this book with great care and attention. There cannot be a doubt that it is a very great advance on all your former writing, and most especially in respect of tenderness. In character it is excellent. Mr. Fairlie as good as the lawyer, and the lawyer as good as he. Mr. Vesey and Miss Halcombe, in their different ways, equally meritorious. Sir Percival, also, is most skilfully shown, though I doubt (you see what small points I come to) whether any man ever showed uneasiness by hand or foot without being forced by nature to show it in his face too. The story is very interesting, and the writing of it admirable.

I seem to have noticed, here and there, that the great pains you take express themselves a trifle too much, and you know that I always contest your disposition to give an audience credit for nothing, which necessarily involves the forcing of points on their attention, and which I have always observed them to resent when they find it out — as they always will and do. But on turning to the book again, I find it difficult to take out an instance of this. It rather belongs to your habit of thought and manner of going about the work. Perhaps I express my meaning best when I say that the three people who write the narratives in these proofs have a DISSECTIVE property in common, which is essentially not theirs but yours; and that my own effort would be to strike more of what is got *that way* out of them by collision with one another, and by the working of the story.

You know what an interest I have felt in your powers from the beginning of our friendship, and how very high I rate them? *I* know that this is an admirable book, and that it grips the difficulties of the weekly portion and throws them in masterly style. No one else could do it half so well. I have stopped



I had turned but a few pages, and come to the shadow on the bright sofa at the foot of the bed, when I knew myself to be in the hands of an artist. That rare and delightful recognition I never lost for a moment until I closed the second volume at the end. I am "a good audience" when I have reason to be, and my girls would testify to you, if there were need, that I cried over it heartily. Your story seems to me remarkably ingenious. I had not the least idea of the purport of the sealed paper until you chose to enlighten me; and then I felt it to be quite natural, quite easy, thoroughly in keeping with the character and presentation of the Liverpool man. The position of the Bell family in the story has a special air of nature and truth; is quite new to me, and is so dexterously and delicately done that I find the deaf daughter no less real and distinct than the clergyman's wife. The turn of the story round that damnable Princess I pursued with a pleasure with which I could pursue nothing but a true interest; and I declare to you that if I were put upon finding anything better than the scene of Roccabella's death, I should stare round my bookshelves very much at a loss for a long time. Similarly, your characters have really surprised me. From the lawyer to the Princess, I swear to them as true; and in your fathoming of Rosamond altogether, there is a profound wise knowledge that I admire and respect with a heartiness not easily overstated in words.

I am not quite with you as to the Italians. Your knowledge of the Italian character seems to me surprisingly subtle and penetrating; but I think we owe it to those most unhappy men and their political wretchedness to ask ourselves mercifully, whether their faults are not essentially the faults of a people long oppressed and priest-ridden; — whether their tendency to slink and conspire is not a tendency that spies in every dress, from the triple crown to a lousy head, have engendered in their ancestors through generations? Again, like you, I shudder at the distresses that come of these unavailing risings; my blood runs hotter, as yours does, at the thought of the leaders safe, and the instruments perishing by hundreds; yet what is to be done? Their wrongs are so great that they *will* rise from time to time somehow. It would be to doubt the eternal providence of God to doubt *that they will* rise successfully at last. Unavailing *struggles against* a dominant tyranny precede all *successful turning against it.* And is it not a little hard in us

Englishmen, whose forefathers have risen so often and striven against so much, to look on, in our own security, through microscopes, and detect the motes in the brains of men driven mad? Think, if you and I were Italians, and had grown from boyhood to our present time, menaced in every day through all these years by that infernal confessional, dungeons, and soldiers, could we be better than these men? Should we be so good? I should not, I am afraid, if I know myself. Such things would make of me a moody, bloodthirsty, implacable man, who would do anything for revenge; and if I compromised the truth — put it at the worst, habitually — where should I ever have had it before me? In the old Jesuits' college at Genoa, on the Chiaja at Naples, in the churches of Rome, at the University of Padua, on the Piazzo San Marco at Venice, where? And the government is in all these places, and in all Italian places. I have seen something of these men. I have known Mazzini and Gallenga; Manin was tutor to my daughters in Paris; I have had long talks about scores of them with poor Ary Scheffer, who was their best friend. I have gone back to Italy after ten years, and

CCCXCVII. JOHN FORSTER

11, Wellington Street, North Strand, London, W. C.,
Wednesday, May 2, 1860.

My dear Forster, — It did not occur to me in reading your most excellent, interesting, and remarkable book,[1] that it could with any reason be called one-sided. If Clarendon had never written his "History of the Rebellion," then I can understand that it might be. But just as it would be impossible to answer an advocate who had misstated the merits of a case for his own purpose, without, in the interests of truth, and not of the other side merely, re-stating the merits and showing them in their real form, so I cannot see the practicability of telling what you had to tell without in some sort championing the misrepresented side, and I think that you don't do that as an advocate, but as a judge.

The evidence has been suppressed and coloured, and the judge goes through it and puts it straight. It is not *his* fault if it all goes one way and tends to one plain conclusion. Nor is it his fault that it goes the further when it is laid out straight, or seems to do so, because it was so knotted and twisted up before.

I can understand any man's, and particularly Carlyle's, having a lingering respect that does not like to be disturbed for those (in the best sense of the word) loyal gentlemen of the country who went with the king and were so true to him. But I don't think Carlyle sufficiently considers that the great mass of those gentlemen *did n't know the truth*, that it was a part of their loyalty to believe what they were told on the king's behalf, and that it is reasonable to suppose that the king was too artful to make known to *them* (especially after failure) what were very acceptable designs to the desperate soldiers of fortune about Whitehall. And it was to me a curious point of adventitious interest arising out of your book, to reflect on the probability of their having been as ignorant of the real scheme in Charles's head, as their descendants and followers down to this time, and to think with pity and admiration that they believed the *cause to be so much* better than it was. This is a *notion I was anxious to have* expressed in our account of the

[1] *The Impeachment* of the Five Members.

book in these pages. For I don't suppose Clarendon or any other such man to sit down and tell posterity something that he has not "tried on" in his own time. Do you?

In the whole narrative I saw nothing anywhere to which I demurred. I admired it all, went with it all, and was proud of my friend's having written it all. I felt it to be all square and sound and right, and to be of enormous importance in these times. Firstly, to the people who (like myself) are so sick of the shortcomings of representative government as to have no interest in it. Secondly, to the humbugs at Westminster who have come down — a long, long way — from those men, as you know. When the Great Remonstrance came out, I was in the thick of my story, and was always busy with it; but I am very glad I did n't read it then, as I shall read it now to much better purpose. All the time I was at work on the "Two Cities," I read no books but such as had the air of the time in them.

To return for a final word to the Five Members. I thought the marginal references overdone. Here and there, they had a comical look to me for that reason, and reminded me of shows and plays where everything is in the bill.

road to matrimony (that I know of); but it is likely enough that she will, as she is very agreeable and intelligent. They are both very pretty. My eldest boy, Charley, has been in Barings' house for three or four years, and is now going to Hong Kong, strongly backed up by Barings, to buy tea on his own account, as a means of forming a connection and seeing more of the practical part of a merchant's calling, before starting in London for himself. His brother Frank (Jeffrey's godson) I have just recalled from France and Germany, to come and learn business, and qualify himself to join his brother on his return from the Celestial Empire. The next boy, Sydney Smith, is designed for the navy, and is in training at Portsmouth, awaiting his nomination. He is about three foot high, with the biggest eyes ever seen, and is known in the Portsmouth parts as "Young Dickens, who can do everything."

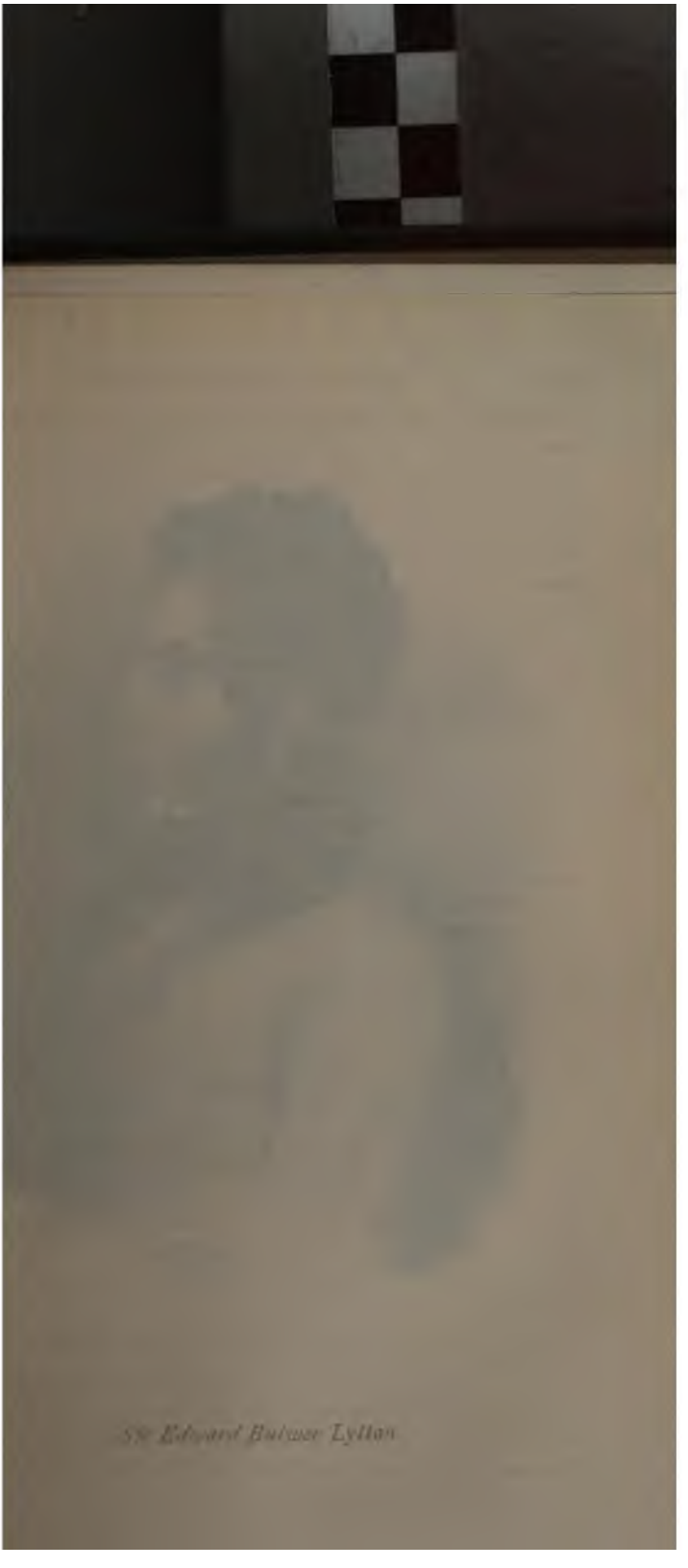
Another boy is at school in France; the youngest of all has a private tutor at home. I have forgotten the second in order, who is in India. He went out as ensign of a non-existent native regiment, got attached to the 42d Highlanders, one of the finest regiments in the Queen's service; has remained with them ever since, and got made a lieutenant by the chances of the rebellious campaign, before he was eighteen. Miss Hogarth, always Miss Hogarth, is the guide, philosopher, and friend of all the party, and a very close affection exists between her and the girls. I doubt if she will ever marry. I don't know whether to be glad of it or sorry for it.

I have laid down my pen and taken a long breath after writing this family history. I have also considered whether there are any more children, and I don't think there are. If I should remember two or three others presently, I will mention them in a postscript.

We think Townshend looking a little the worse for the winter, and we perceive Bully to be decidedly old upon his legs, and of a most diabolical turn of mind. When they first arrived the weather was very dark and cold, and kept them indoors. It has since turned very warm and bright, but with a dusty and sharp east wind. They are still kept indoors by this change, and I begin to wonder what change will let them out. Townshend dines with us every Sunday. You may be sure that we always talk of you and yours, and drink to you heartily.

Public matters here are thought to be rather improving; the deep mistrust of the gentleman in Paris being counteracted by the vigorous state of preparation into which the nation is getting. You will have observed, of course, that we establish a new defaulter in respect of some great trust, about once a quarter. The last one, the cashier of a City bank, is considered to have distinguished himself greatly, a quarter of a million of money being high game.

No, my friend, I have not shouldered my rifle yet, but I should do so on more pressing occasion. Every other man in the row of men I know — if they were all put in a row — is a volunteer though. There is a tendency rather to overdo the wearing of the uniform, but that is natural enough in the case of the youngest men. The turn-out is generally very creditable indeed. At the ball they had (in a perfectly unventilated building), their new leather belts and pouches smelt so fearfully that it was, as my eldest daughter said, like shoemaking in a great prison. She, consequently, distinguished herself by fainting away in the most inaccessible place in the whole structure, and being brought out (horizontally) by a file of volunteers, like



Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton

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In the first place, although the surrender of the feudal privileges (on a motion seconded by a nobleman of great rank) was the occasion of a sentimental scene, I see no reason to doubt, but on the contrary, many reasons to believe, that some of these privileges had been used to the frightful oppression of the peasant, quite as near to the time of the Revolution as the doctor's narrative, which, you will remember, dates long before the Terror. And surely when the new philosophy was the talk of the salons and the slang of the hour, it is not unreasonable or unallowable to suppose a nobleman wedded to the old cruel ideas, and representing the time going out, as his nephew represents the time coming in; as to the condition of the peasant in France generally at that day, I take it that if anything be certain on earth it is certain that it was intolerable. No *ex post facto* inquiries and provings by figures will hold water, surely, against the tremendous testimony of men living at the time.

There is a curious book printed at Amsterdam, written to make out no case whatever, and tiresome enough in its literal, dictionary-like minuteness, scattered up and down the pages of which is full authority for my marquis. This is "Mercier's Tableau de Paris." Rousseau is the authority for the peasant's shutting up his house when he had a bit of meat. The taxtaker was the authority for the wretched creature's impoverishment.

I am not clear, and I never have been clear, respecting that canon of fiction which forbids the interposition of accident in such a case as Madame Defarge's death. Where the accident is inseparable from the passion and emotion of the character, where it is strictly consistent with the whole design, and arises out of some culminating proceeding on the part of the character which the whole story has led up to, it seems to me to become, as it were, an act of divine justice. And when I use Miss Pross (though this is quite another question) to bring about that catastrophe, I have the positive intention of making that half-comic intervention a part of the desperate woman's failure, and of opposing that mean death — instead of a desperate one in the streets, which she would n't have minded — to the dignity of Carton's wrong or right; this *was* the design, and seemed to be in the fitness of things.

Now, as to the reading. I am sorry to say that it is out of the question this season. I have had an attack of rheumatism

— quite a stranger to me — which remains hovering about my left side, after having doubled me up in the back, and which would disable me from standing for two hours. I have given up all dinners and town engagements, and come to my little Falstaff house here, sensible of the necessity of country training all through the summer. Smith would have proposed any appointment to see you on the subject, but he has been dreadfully ill with tic. Whenever I read in London, I will gladly put a night aside for your purpose, and we will plot to connect your name with it, and give it some specialty. But this could not be before Christmas-time, as I should not be able to read sooner, for in the hot weather it would be useless. Let me hear from you about this when you have considered it. It would greatly diminish the expenses, remember.

Ever affectionately and faithfully.

CCCC. THE EARL OF CARLISLE

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, August 8, 1860.

MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE, — Coming back here after an

CCCCI. W. H. WILLS

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Tuesday, September 4, 1860.

MY DEAR WILLS, — Your description of your sea-castle makes your room here look uncommonly dusty. Likewise the costermongers in the street outside, and the one customer (drunk, with his head on the table) in the Crown Coffee-House over the way, in York Street, have an earthy, and, as I may say, a landlubberly aspect. Cape Horn, to the best of *my* belief, is a tremendous way off, and there are more bricks and cabbage-leaves between this office and that dismal point of land than *you* can possibly imagine.

Coming here from the station this morning, I met, coming from the execution of the Wentworth murderer, such a tide of ruffians as never could have flowed from any point but the gallows. Without any figure of speech it turned one white and sick to behold them.

Tavistock House is cleared to-day, and possession delivered up. I must say that in all things the purchaser has behaved thoroughly well, and that I cannot call to mind any occasion when I have had money dealing with a Christian that have been so satisfactory, considerate, and trusting.

I am ornamented at present with one of my most intensely preposterous and utterly indescribable colds. If you were to make a voyage from Cape Horn to Wellington Street, you would scarcely recognise in the bowed form, weeping eyes, rasped nose, and snivelling wretch whom you would encounter here, the once gay and sparkling, etc., etc.

Everything else here is as quiet as possible. Business reports you receive from Holsworth. Wilkie looked in to-day, going to Gloucestershire for a week. The office is full of discarded curtains and coverings from Tavistock House, which Georgina is coming up this evening to select from and banish. Mary is in raptures with the beauties of Dunkeld, but is not very well in health. The Admiral (Sydney) goes up for his examination to-morrow. If he fails to pass with credit, I will never believe in anybody again, so in that case look out for your own reputation with me.

This is really all the news I have, except that I am lazy,

and that Wilkie dines here next Tuesday, in order that we may have a talk about the Christmas number.

I beg to send my kind regard to Mrs. Wills, and to inquire how she likes wearing a hat, which of course she does. I also want to know from her in confidence whether *Crwllm festidiniog llymthll y wodd?*

Yesterday I burnt, in the field at Gad's Hill, the accumulated letters and papers of twenty years. They sent up a smoke like the genie when he got out of the casket on the seashore; and as it was an exquisite day when I began, and rained very heavily when I finished, I suspect my correspondence of having overcast the face of the heavens.

Ever faithfully.

P. S. — Kind regard to Mr. and Mrs. Novelli.[1]

I have just sent out for "The Globe." No news.

Hullah's daughter (an artist) tells me that certain female students have addressed the Royal Academy, entreating them to find a place for their education. I think it a capital move, for which I can do something popular and telling in "The Regis-

an ease and frankness with a modesty and sense of responsibility that was really above all praise. Alfred went from there to a great school at Wimbledon, where they train for India and the artillery and engineers. Sydney went from there to Mr. Barrow, at Southsea. In both instances the new masters wrote to me of their own accord, bearing quite unsolicited testimony to the merits of the old, and expressing their high recognition of what they had done. These things speak for themselves.

Sydney has just passed his examination as a naval cadet and come home, all eyes and gold buttons. He has twelve days' leave before going on board the training-ship. Katie and her husband are in France, and seem likely to remain there for an indefinite period. Mary is on a month's visit in Scotland; Georgina, Frank, and Plorn are at home here; and we all want Mary and her little dog back again. I have sold Tavistock House, am making this rather complete in its way, and am on the restless eve of beginning a new big book; but mean to have a furnished house in town (in some accessible quarter) from February or so to June. May we meet there.

Your handwriting is always so full of pleasant memories to me, that when I took it out of the post-office at Rochester this afternoon it quite stirred my heart. But we must not think of old times as sad times, or regard them as anything but the fathers and mothers of the present. We must all climb steadily up the mountain after the talking-bird, the singing-tree, and the yellow water, and must all bear in mind that the previous climbers who were scared into looking back got turned into black stone.

Mary Boyle was here a little while ago, as affectionate at heart as ever, as young, and as pleasant. Of course we talked often of you. So let me know when you are established in Half-Moon Street, and I shall be truly delighted to come and see you.

For my attachments are strong attachments, and never weaken. In right of bygones, I feel as if "all Northamptonshire" belonged to me, as all Northumberland did to Lord Bateman in the ballad. In memory of your warming your feet at the fire in that waste of a waiting-room when I read at Brighton, I have ever since taken that watering-place to my bosom as I never did before. And you and Switzerland are always one to me, and always inseparable.

Charley was heard of yesterday, from Shanghai, going to Japan, intending to meet his brother Walter at Calcutta, and having an idea of beguiling the time between whiles by asking to be taken as an amateur with the English Chinese force. Everybody caressed him and asked him everywhere, and he seemed to go. With kind regards, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Ever affectionately yours.

CCCCIII. EDMUND YATES

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, September 23, 1860.

MY DEAR E. Y., — I did not write to you in your bereavement,[1] because I knew that the girls had written to you, and because I instinctively shrunk from making a form of what was so real. *You* knew what a loving and faithful remembrance I always had of your mother as a part of my youth — no more capable of restoration than my youth itself. All the womanly goodness, grace, and beauty of my drama went out with her. To the last I never could hear her voice without emotion. I think of her as of a beautiful part of my own youth, and this dream that we are all dreaming seems to darken.

But it is not to say this that I write now. It comes to the point of my pen in spite of me.

"Holding up the Mirror" is in next week's number. I have taken out all this funeral part of it. Not because I disliked it (for, indeed, I thought it the best part of the paper), but because it rather grated on me, going over the proof at that time, as a remembrance that would be better reserved a little while. Also because it made rather a mixture of yourself as an individual, with something that does not belong or attach to you as an individual. You can have the MS.; and as a part of a paper describing your own juvenile remembrances of a theatre, there it is, needing no change or adaption.

Ever faithfully.

[1] The death of his mother.

CCCCIV. MISS DICKENS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, September 23, 1860.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — If you had been away from us and ill with anybody in the world but our dear Mrs. White, I should have been in a state of the greatest anxiety and uneasiness about you. But as I know it to be impossible that you could be in kinder or better hands, I was not in the least restless about you, otherwise than as it grieved me to hear of my poor dear girl's suffering such pain. I hope it is over now for many a long day, and that you will come back to us a thousand times better in health than you left us.

Don't come back too soon. Take time and get well restored. There is no hurry, the house is not near to-rights yet, and though we all want you, and though Boy wants you, we all (including Boy) deprecate a fatiguing journey being taken too soon.

As to the carpenters, they are absolutely maddening. They are always at work, yet never seem to do anything. Lillie was down on Friday, and said (his eye fixed on Maidstone, and rubbing his hand to conciliate his moody employer) that "he did n't think there would be very much left to do after Saturday, the 29th."

I did n't throw him out of the window. Your aunt tells you all the news, and leaves me no chance of distinguishing myself, I know. You have been told all about my brackets in the drawing-room, all about the glass rescued from the famous stage-wreck of Tavistock House, all about everything here and at the office. The office is really a success. As comfortable, cheerful, and private as anything of the kind can possibly be.

I took the Admiral (but this you know too, no doubt) to Dollond's, the mathematical instrument-maker's, last Monday, to buy that part of his outfit. His sextant (which is about the size and shape of a cocked hat), on being applied to his eye, entirely concealed him. Not the faintest visage of the distinguished officer behind it was perceptible to the human vision. All through the City, people turned round and stared at him with the sort of pleasure people take in a little model. We went on to Chatham this day week, in search of some big man-

of-war's-man who should be under obligation to salute him — unfortunately found none. But this no doubt you know too, and all my news falls flat.

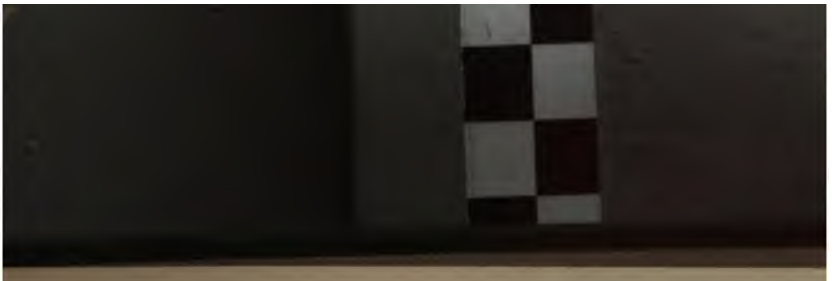
I am driven out of my room by paint, and am writing in the best spare room. The whole prospect is excessively wet; it does not rain now, but yesterday it did tremendously, and it rained very heavily in the night. We are even muddy; and that is saying a great deal in this dry country of chalk and sand. Everywhere the corn is lying out and saturated with wet. The hops (nearly everywhere) look as if they had been burnt.

In my mind's eye I behold Mrs. Bouncer, still with some traces of her late anxiety on her faithful countenance, balancing herself a little unequally on her bow fore legs, pricking up her ears, with her head on one side, and slightly opening her intellectual nostrils. I send my loving and respectful duty to her.

To dear Mrs. White, and to White, and to Clara, say anything from me that is loving and grateful.

My dearest Mamie,

Ever and ever your most affectionate father.



There is no denying that he looks very small aboard a great ship, and that a boy must have a strong and decided specialty for the sea to take to such a life. Captain Harris was not on board, but the other chief officers were, and were highly obliging. We went over the ship. I should say there can be little or no individuality of address to any particular boy, but that they all tumble through their education in a crowded way. The Admiral's servant (I mean our Admiral's) had an idiotic appearance, but perhaps it did him injustice (a mahogany-faced marine by station). The Admiral's washing apparatus is about the size of a muffin-plate, and he could easily live in his chest. The meeting with Bromley was a piece of great good fortune, and the dear old chap could not have been left more happily.

Ever, my dearest Georgy, your most affectionate.

CCCCVI. MISS POWER

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Tuesday, September 25, 1860.

MY DEAR MARGUERITE, — I like the article exceedingly, and think the translations *admirable* — spirited, fresh, bold, and evidently faithful. I will get the paper into the next number I make up, No. 78. I will send a proof to you for your correction, either next Monday or this day week. Or would you like to come here next Monday and dine with us at five, and go over to Madame Céleste's opening? Then you could correct your paper on the premises, as they drink their beer at the beer-shops.

Some of the introductory remarks on French literature I propose to strike out, as a little too essayical for this purpose, and likely to throw out a large portion of the large audience at starting, as suggesting some very different kind of article. My daring pen shall have imbued its murderous heart with ink before you see the proof.

With kind regards, Ever affectionately.

CCCCVII. JOHN FORSTER

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Thursday, October 4, 1860.

MY DEAR FORSTER, — It would be a great pleasure to me to come to you, an immense pleasure, and to sniff the sea I love (from the shore); but I fear I must come down one morning and come back at night. I will tell you why.

Last week, I got to work on a new story. I called a council of war at the office on Tuesday. It was perfectly clear that the one thing to be done was, for me to strike in. I have therefore decided to begin a story, the length of the "Tale of Two Cities," on the 1st of December — begin publishing, that is. I must make the most I can out of the book. When I come down, I will bring you the first two or three weekly parts. The name is, "GREAT EXPECTATIONS." I think a good name?

Now the preparations to get ahead, combined with the absolute necessity of my giving a good deal of time to the Christmas number, will tie me to the grindstone pretty tightly. It will

CCCCVIII. WILKIE COLLINS

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Wednesday, October 24, 1860.

MY DEAR WILKIE, — I have been down to Brighton to see Forster, and found your letter there on arriving by express this morning. I also found a letter from Georgina, describing that Mary's horse went down suddenly on a stone, and how Mary was thrown, and had her riding-habit torn to pieces, and has a deep cut just above the knee — fortunately not in the knee itself, which is doing exceedingly well, but which will probably incapacitate her from walking for days and days to come. It is well it was no worse. The accident occurred at Milton, near Gravesend, and they found Mary in a public-house there, wonderfully taken care of and looked after.

I propose that we start on Thursday morning, the 1st of November. The train for Penzance leaves the Great Western terminus at a quarter-past nine in the morning. It is a twelve hours' journey. Shall we meet at the terminus at nine? I shall be here all the previous day, and shall dine here.

Your account of your passage goes to my heart through my stomach. What a pity I was not there on board to present that green-visaged, but sweet-tempered and uncomplaining spectacle of imbecility, at which I am so expert under stormy circumstances, in the poet's phrase: —

> As I sweep
> Through the deep,
> When the stormy winds do blow.

What a pity I am not there, at Meurice's, to sleep the sleep of infancy through the long plays where the gentlemen stand with their backs to the mantelpieces. What a pity I am not with you to make a third at the Trois Frères, and drink no end of bottles of Bordeaux, without ever getting a touch of redness in my (poet's phrase again) "innocent nose." But I must go down to Gad's to-night, and get to work again. Four weekly numbers have been ground off the wheel, and at least another must be turned before we meet. They shall be yours in the slumberous railway carriage.

I don't think Forster is at all in good health. He was *tremendously hospitable and hearty.* I walked six hours and a

half on the downs yesterday, and never stopped or sat. Early in the morning, before breakfast, I went to the nearest baths to get a shower-bath. They kept me waiting longer than I thought reasonable, and seeing a man in a cap in the passage, I went to him and said: "I really must request that you 'll be good enough to see about this shower-bath;" and it was Hullah! waiting for another bath.

Rumours were brought into the house on Saturday night, that there was a "ghost" up at Larkins's monument. Plorn was frightened to death, and I was apprehensive of the ghost's spreading and coming there, and causing "warning" and desertion among the servants. Frank was at home, and Andrew Gordon was with us. Time, nine o'clock. Village talk and credulity, amazing. I armed the two boys with a short stick apiece, and shouldered my double-barrelled gun, well loaded with shot. "Now observe," says I to the domestics, "if anybody is playing tricks and has got a head, I'll blow it off." Immense impression. New groom evidently convinced that he has entered the service of a bloodthirsty demon. We ascend to the monument. Stop at the gate. Moon is rising. Heavy shadows. "Now, look out!" (from the bloodthirsty demon

CCCCIX. SIR JOHN BOWRING

GAD'S HILL, Wednesday, 31st October, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR JOHN, — First let me congratulate you on your marriage and wish you all happiness and prosperity.

Secondly, I must tell you that I was greatly vexed with the Chatham people for not giving me early notice of your lecture. In that case I should (of course) have presided, as President of the Institution, and I should have asked you to honour my Falstaff house here. But when they made your kind intention known to me, I had made some important business engagements at the "All the Year Round" office for that evening, which I could not possibly forego. I charged them to tell you so, and was going to write to you when I found your kind letter.

Thanks for your paper, which I have sent to the Printer's with much pleasure.

We heard of your accident here, and of your "making nothing of it." I said that you did n't make much of disasters, and that you took poison (from natives) as quite a matter of course in the way of business.

Faithfully yours.

CCCCX. MISS HOGARTH

BIDEFORD, NORTH DEVON, Thursday Night, November 1, 1860.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — I write (with the most impracticable iron pen on earth) to report our safe arrival here, in a beastly hotel. We start to-morrow morning at nine on a two days' posting between this and Liskeard in Cornwall. We are due in Liskeard (but nobody seems to know anything about the roads) on Saturday afternoon, and we purpose making an excursion in that neighbourhood on Sunday, and coming up from Liskeard on Monday by Great Western fast train, which will get us to London, please God, in good time on Monday evening. There I shall hear from you, and know whether dear Mamie will move to London too.

We had a pleasant *journey* down here, and a beautiful day. *No adventures whatever.* Nothing has happened to Wilkie, *and he sends love.*

We had stinking fish for dinner, and have been able to drink nothing, though we have ordered wine, beer, and brandy and water. There is nothing in the house but two tarts and a pair of snuffers. The landlady is playing cribbage with the landlord in the next room (behind a thin partition), and they seem quite comfortable.

Ever, my dearest Georgy, your most affectionate.

CCCCXI. A. H. LAYARD

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, 4th December, 1860.

MY DEAR LAYARD, — I know you will readily believe that I would come if I could, and that I am heartily sorry I cannot.

A new story of my writing, nine months long, is just begun in "All the Year Round." A certain allotment of my time when I have that story demand upon me, has, all through my author-life, been an essential condition of my health and success. I have just returned here to work so many hours every day for so many days. It is really impossible for me to break my hand

CCCCXII. MISS MARY BOYLE

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Friday, December 28, 1860.

MY DEAR MARY, — I cannot tell you how much I thank you for the beautiful cigar-case, and how seasonable, and friendly, and good, and warm-hearted it looked when I opened it at Gad's Hill. Besides which, it is a cigar-case, and will hold cigars; two crowning merits that I never yet knew to be possessed by any article claiming the same name. For all of these reasons, but more than all because it comes from you, I love it, and send you eighteen hundred and sixty kisses, with one in for the new year.

Both excellent stories and perfectly new. Your Joe swears that he never heard either — never a word or syllable of either — afore he laughed at 'em this blessed day.

I have no news, except that I am not quite well, and am being doctored. Pray read "Great Expectations." I think it is very droll. It is a very great success, and seems universally liked. I suppose because it opens funnily, and with an interest too.

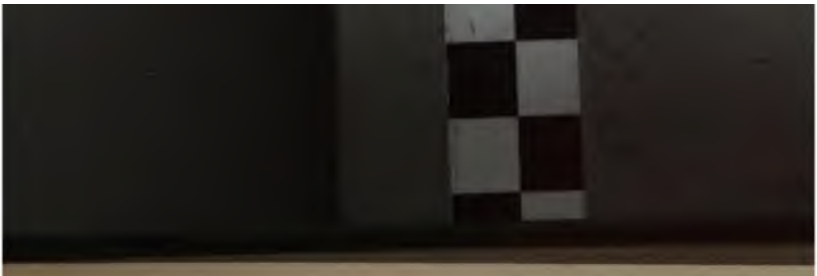
I pass my time here (I am staying here alone) in working, taking physic, and taking a stall at a theatre every night. On Boxing-Night I was at Covent Garden. A dull pantomime was "worked" (as we say) better than I ever saw a heavy piece worked on a first night, until suddenly and without a moment's warning, every scene on that immense stage fell over on its face, and disclosed chaos by gaslight behind! There never was such a business; about sixty people who were on the stage being extinguished in the most remarkable manner. Not a soul was hurt. In the uproar, some moon-calf rescued a porter-pot, six feet high (out of which the clown had been drinking when the accident happened), and stood it on the cushion of the lowest proscenium box, P. S., beside a lady and gentleman, who were dreadfully ashamed of it. The moment the house knew that nobody was injured, they directed their whole attention to this gigantic porter-pot in its genteel position (the lady and gentleman trying to hide behind it), and roared with laughter. When a modest footman came from behind the curtain to clear it, and took it up in his arms like a Brobdingnagian baby,

we all laughed more than ever we had laughed in our lives. I don't know why.

We have had a fire here, but our people put it out before the parish engine arrived, like a drivelling perambulator, with *the beadle in it*, like an imbecile baby. Popular opinion, disappointed in the fire having been put out, snowballed the beadle. God bless it!

Over the way at the Lyceum, there is a very fair Christmas piece, with one or two uncommonly well-done nigger songs — one remarkably gay and mad, done in the finale to a scene. Also a very nice transformation, though I don't know what it means.

The poor actors waylay me in Bow Street, to represent their necessities; and I often see one cut down a court when he beholds me coming, cut round Drury Lane to face me, and come up towards me near this door in the freshest and most accidental way, as if I was the last person he expected to see on the surface of this globe. The other day, there thus appeared before me (simultaneously with a scent of rum in the air) one aged and greasy man, with a pair of pumps under his arm. He said he thought if he could get down to somewhere (I think it was



CCCCXIII. M. DE CERJAT

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Friday, February 1, 1861.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — You have read in the papers of our heavy English frost. At Gad's Hill it was so intensely cold, that in our warm dining-room on Christmas Day we could hardly sit at the table. In my study on that morning, long after a great fire of coal and wood had been lighted, the thermometer was I don't know where below freezing. The bath froze, and all the pipes froze, and remained in a stony state for five or six weeks. The water in the bedroom jugs froze, and blew up the crockery. The snow on the top of the house froze, and was imperfectly removed with axes. My beard froze as I walked about, and I could n't detach my cravat and coat from it until I was thawed at the fire. My boys and half the officers stationed at Chatham skated away without a check to Gravesend — five miles off — and repeated the performance for three or four weeks. At last the thaw came, and then everything split, blew up, dripped, poured, perspired, and got spoilt. Since then we have had a small visitation of the plague of servants; the cook (in a riding-habit) and the groom (in a dress-coat and jewels) having mounted Mary's horse and mine, in our absence, and scoured the neighbouring country at a rattling pace. And when I went home last Saturday, I innocently wondered how the horses came to be out of condition, and gravely consulted the said groom on the subject, who gave it as his opinion "which they wanted reg'lar work." We are now coming to town until midsummer. Having sold my own house, to be more free and independent, I have taken a very pretty furnished house, No. 3, Hanover Terrace, Regent's Park. This, of course, on my daughter's account. For I have very good and cheerful bachelor rooms here, with an old servant in charge, who is the cleverest man of his kind in the world, and can do anything, from excellent carpentry to excellent cookery, and has been with me three-and-twenty years.

The American business is the greatest English sensation at present. I venture to predict that the struggle of violence will be a very short one, and will be soon succeeded by some new compact between the Northern and Southern States. Meantime the Lancashire mill-owners are getting very uneasy.

The Italian state of things is not regarded as looking very cheerful. What from one's natural sympathies with a people so oppressed as the Italians, and one's natural antagonism to a pope and a Bourbon (both of which superstitions I do suppose the world to have had more than enough of), I agree with you concerning Victor Emmanuel, and greatly fear that the Southern Italians are much degraded. Still, an united Italy would be of vast importance to the peace of the world, and would be a rock in Louis Napoleon's way, as he very well knows. Therefore the idea must be championed, however much against hope.

My eldest boy, just home from China, was descried by Townshend's Henri the moment he landed at Marseilles, and was by him borne in triumph to Townshend's rooms. The weather was snowy, slushy, beastly; and Marseilles was, as it usually is to my thinking, well-nigh intolerable. My boy could not stay with Townshend, as he was coming on by express train; but he says: "I sat with him and saw him dine. He had a leg of lamb and a tremendous cold." That is the whole description I have been able to extract from him.

This journal is doing gloriously, and "Great Expectations"

CCCCXIV. E. M. WARD, R. A.

3, Hanover Terrace, Regent's Park,
Saturday Night, March 9, 1861.

My dear Ward, — I cannot tell you how gratified I have been by your letter, and what a splendid recompense it is for any pleasure I am giving you. Such generous and earnest sympathy from such a brother artist gives me true delight. I am proud of it, believe me, and moved by it to do all the better. Ever faithfully yours.

CCCCXV. SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

3, Hanover Terrace, Regent's Park,
Sunday, 28th April, 1861.

My dear Bulwer Lytton, — My story will finish in the first week in August. Yours ought to begin in the last week of July, or the last week but one. Wilkie Collins will be at work to follow you. The publication has made a very great success with "Great Expectations," and could not present a finer time for you.

The question of length may be easily adjusted.

Of the misgiving you entertain I cannot of course judge until you give me leave to rush to the perusal. I swear that I never thought I had half so much self-denial as I have shown in this case! I think I shall come out at Exeter Hall as a choice vessel on the strength of it. In the mean while I have quickened the printer and told him to get on fast.

You cannot think how happy you make me by what you write of "Great Expectations." There is nothing like the pride of making such an effect on such a writer as you.

Ever faithfully.

CCCCXVI. THE SAME

3, Hanover Terrace, Sunday, 12th May, 1861.

My dear Bulwer Lytton, — I received your revised proofs only yesterday, and *I sat down to* read them last night. And *before I say anything further I* may tell you that I COULD NOT *lay them aside, but was obliged* to go on with them in my bed-

room until I got into a very ghostly state indeed. This morning I have taken them again and have gone through them with the utmost attention.

Of the beauty and power of the writing I say not a word, or of its originality and boldness, or of its quite extraordinary constructive skill. I confine myself solely to your misgiving, and to the question whether there is any sufficient foundation for it.

On the last head I say, without the faintest hesitation, most decidedly there is NOT sufficient foundation for it. I do not share it in the least. I believe that the readers who have here given their minds (or perhaps had any to give) to those strange psychological mysteries in ourselves, of which we are all more or less conscious, will accept your wonders as curious weapons in the armoury of fiction, and will submit themselves to the Art with which said weapons are used. Even to that class of intelligence the marvellous addresses itself from a very strong position; and that class of intelligence is not accustomed to find the marvellous in such very powerful hands as yours. On more imaginative readers the tale will fall (or I am greatly

"The Steel Casket."
"The Lost Manuscript."
"Derval Court."
"Perpetual Youth."
"Maggie."
"Dr. Fenwick."
"Life and Death."

The four last I think the best. There is an objection to "Dr. Fenwick" because there has been "Dr. Antonio," and there is a book of Dumas's which repeats the objection. I don't think "Fenwick" startling enough. It appears to me that a more startling title would take the (John) Bull by the horns, and would be a serviceable concession to your misgiving, as suggesting a story off the stones of the gas-lighted Brentford Road.

The title is the first thing to be settled, and cannot be settled too soon.

For the purposes of the weekly publication the divisions of the story will often have to be greatly changed, though afterwards, in the complete book, you can, of course, divide it into chapters, free from that reference. For example: I would end the first chapter on the third slip at "and through the ghostly streets, under the ghostly moon, went back to my solitary room." The rest of what is now your first chapter might be made Chapter II., and would end the first weekly part.

I think I have become, by dint of necessity and practice, rather cunning in this regard; and perhaps you would not mind my looking closely to such points from week to week. It so happens that if you had written the opening of this story expressly for the occasion its striking incidents could not possibly have followed one another better. One other merely mechanical change I suggest now. I would not have an initial letter for the town, but would state in the beginning that I gave the town a fictitious name. I suppose a blank or a dash rather fends a good many people off — because it always has that effect upon me.

Be sure that I am perfectly frank and open in all I have said in this note, and that I have not a grain of reservation in my mind. I think *the story* a very fine one, one that no other *man could write, and that* there is no strength in your misgiving *for the two reasons:* firstly, that the work is professedly

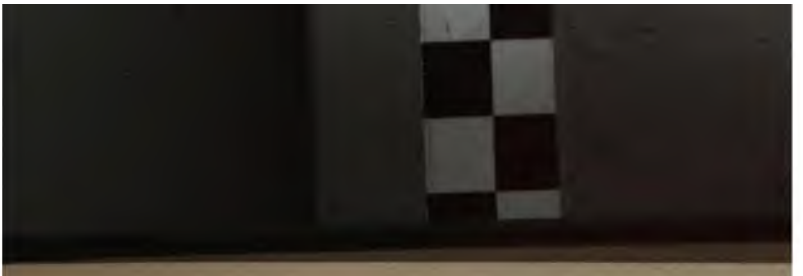
a work of Fancy and Fiction, in which the reader is not required against his will to take everything for Fact; secondly, that it is written by the man who can write it. The Magician's servant does not know what to do with the ghost, and has, consequently, no business with him. The Magician does know what to do with him, and has all the business with him that he can transact.

I am quite at ease on the points that you have expressed yourself as not at ease upon. Quite. I cannot too often say that if they were carried on weak shoulders they would break the bearer down. But in your mastering of them lies the mastery over the reader.

This will reach you at Knebworth, I hope, to-morrow afternoon. Pray give your doubts to the winds of that high spot, and believe that if I had them I would swarm up the flag-staff quite as nimbly as Margrave and nail the Fenwick colours to the top.

Ever affectionately yours.

CCCCXVII. SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON



CCCCXVIII. LADY OLLIFFE

LORD WARDEN HOTEL, DOVER, Sunday, 26th May, 1861.

MY DEAR LADY OLLIFFE, — I have run away to this sea-beach to get rid of my neuralgic face.

Touching the kind invitations received from you this morning, I feel that the only course I can take — without being a Humbug — is to decline them. After the middle of June I shall be mostly at Gad's Hill — I know that I cannot do better than keep out of the way of hot rooms and late dinners, and what would you think of me, or call me, if I were to accept and not come!

No, no, no. Be still, my soul. Be virtuous, eminent author. Do *not* accept, my Dickens. She is to come to Gad's Hill with her spouse. Await her *there*, my child. (Thus the voice of wisdom.)

My dear Lady Olliffe,

Ever affectionately yours.

CCCCXIX. W. C. MACREADY

"ALL THE YEAR ROUND" OFFICE, Tuesday, June 11, 1861.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — There is little doubt, I think, of my reading at Cheltenham somewhere about November. I submit myself so entirely to Arthur Smith's arrangements for me, that I express my sentiments on this head with modesty. But I think there is scarcely a doubt of my seeing you then.

I have just finished my book of "Great Expectations," and am the worse for wear. Neuralgic pains in the face have troubled me a good deal, and the work has been pretty close. But I hope that the book is a good book, and I have no doubt of very soon throwing off the little damage it has done me.

What with Blondin at the Crystal Palace and Leotard at Leicester Square, we seem to be going back to barbaric excitements. I have not seen, and don't intend to see, the Hero of Niagara (as the posters call him), but I have been beguiled into seeing Leotard, and it is at once the most fearful and most graceful thing I have ever seen done.

Clara White (*grown pretty*) has been staying with us.

I am sore afraid that "The Times," by playing fast and loose with the American question, has very seriously compromised

this country. The Americans northward are perfectly furious on the subject; and Motley the historian (a very sensible man, strongly English in his sympathies) assured me the other day that he thought the harm done very serious indeed, and the dangerous nature of the daily widening breach scarcely calculable.

Kindest and best love to all. Wilkie Collins has just come in, and sends best regard.

Ever most affectionately, my dearest Macready.

CCCCXX. JOHN FORSTER

GAD'S HILL, Monday, July 1, 1861.

MY DEAR FORSTER, — You will be surprised to hear that I have changed the end of "Great Expectations" from and after Pip's return to Joe's, and finding his little likeness there.

Bulwer (who has been, as I think I told you, extraordinarily taken by the book) so strongly urged it upon me, after reading the proofs, and supported his views with such good reasons, that I resolved to make the change. You shall have it when you come back to town. I have put in a very pretty piece of writ-

conviction (his son was here yesterday) that the North will put down the South, and that speedily. In his management of his large business, he is proceeding steadily on that conviction. He says that the South has no money and no credit, and that it is impossible for it to make a successful stand. He may be all wrong, but he is certainly a very shrewd man, and he has never been, as to the United States, an enthusiast of any class.

Poor Lord Campbell's seems to me as easy and good a death as one could desire. There must be a sweep of these men very soon, and one feels as if it must fall out like the breaking of an arch — one stone goes from a prominent place, and then the rest begin to drop. So one looks towards Brougham, and Lyndhurst, and Pollock.

I will add no more to this, or I know I shall not send it; for I am in the first desperate laziness of having done my book, and think of offering myself to the village school as a live example of that vice for the edification of youth.

Ever, my dear Forster, affectionately.

CCCCXXI. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, July 8, 1861.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — I have owed you a letter for so long a time that I fear you may sometimes have misconstrued my silence. But I hope that the sight of the handwriting of your old friend will undeceive you, if you have, and will put that right.

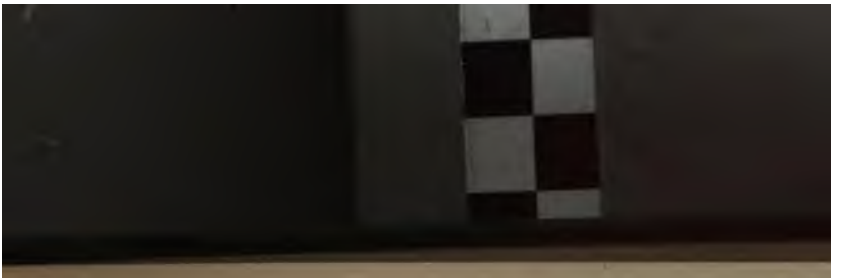
During the progress of my last story, I have been working so hard that very, very little correspondence — except enforced correspondence on business — has passed this pen. And now that I am free again, I devote a few of my first leisure moments to this note.

You seemed in your last to think that I had forgotten you in respect of the Christmas number. Not so at all. I discussed with them here where you were, how you were to be addressed, and the like; finally left the number in a blank envelope, and did not add the address to it until it would have been absurd to send you such *stale bread*. This was my fault, but this was all. *And I should be so pained* at heart if you supposed me *capable of failing in my truth* and cordiality, or in the warm

remembrance of the time we have passed together, that perhaps I make more of it than you meant to do.

My sailor-boy is at home — I was going to write, for the holidays, but I suppose I must substitute "on leave." Under the new regulations, he must not pass out of the Britannia before December. The younger boys are all at school, and coming home this week for the holidays. Mary keeps house, of course, and Katie and her husband surprised us yesterday, and are here now. Charley is holiday-making at Guernsey and Jersey. He has been for some time seeking a partnership in business, and has not yet found one. The matter is in the hands of Mr. Bates, the managing partner in Barings' house, and seems as slow a matter to adjust itself as ever I looked on at. Georgina is, as usual, the general friend and confidante and factotum of the whole party.

Your present correspondent read at St. James's Hall in the beginning of the season, to perfectly astounding audiences; but finding that fatigue and excitement very difficult to manage in conjunction with a story, deemed it prudent to leave off reading in high tide and mid-career, the rather by reason of something



we are in Kent, you are greener than you have been for some years. I hope you may have seen a large-headed photograph with little legs, representing the undersigned, pen in hand, tapping his forehead to knock an idea out. It has just sprung up so abundantly in all the shops, that I am ashamed to go about town looking in at the picture-windows, which is my delight. It seems to me extraordinarily ludicrous, and much more like than the grave portrait done in earnest. It made me laugh when I first came upon it, until I shook again, in open sunlighted Piccadilly.

Pray be a good Christian to me, and don't be retributive in measuring out the time that shall pass before you write to me. And believe me ever,

Your affectionate and faithful.

CCCCXXII. MRS. MILNER GIBSON

GAD'S HILL, Monday, 8th July, 1861.

MY DEAR MRS. GIBSON, — I want very affectionately and earnestly to congratulate you on your eldest daughter's approaching marriage. Up to the moment when Mary told me of it, I had foolishly thought of her always as the pretty little girl with the frank loving face whom I saw last on the sands at Broadstairs. I rubbed my eyes and woke at the words "going to be married," and found I had been walking in my sleep some years.

I want to thank you also for thinking of me on the occasion, but I feel that I am better away from it. I should really have a misgiving that I was a sort of shadow on a young marriage, and you will understand me when I say so, and no more.

But I shall be with you in the best part of myself, in the warmth of sympathy and friendship — and I send my love to the dear girl, and devoutly hope and believe that she will be happy. The face that I remember with perfect accuracy, and could draw here, if I could draw at all, was made to be happy and to make a husband so.

I wonder whether you ever travel by railroad in these times! I wish Mary could tempt you to come by any road to this little place.

With kind regard to Milner Gibson, believe me ever,

Affectionately and faithfully yours.

CCCCXXIII. WILKIE COLLINS

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Wednesday, August 28, 1861.

MY DEAR WILKIE, — I have been going to write to you ever since I received your letter from Whitby, and now I hear from Charley that you are coming home, and must be addressed in the Rue Harley. Let me know whether you will dine here this day week at the usual five. I am at present so addle-headed (having hard Wednesday work in Wills's absence) that I can't write much.

I have got the "Copperfield" reading ready for delivery, and am now going to blaze away at "Nickleby," which I don't like half as well. Every morning I "go in" at these marks for two or three hours, and then collapse and do nothing whatever (counting as nothing much cricket and rounders).

In my time that curious railroad by the Whitby Moor was so much the more curious, that you were balanced against a counter-weight of water, and that you did it like Blondin. But in these remote days the one inn of Whitby was up a back yard, and oyster-shell grottoes were the only view from the best private room. Likewise, sir, I have posted to Whitby. "Pity the sorrows of a poor old man."

The sun is glaring in at these windows with an amount of ferocity insupportable by one of the landed interest, who lies upon his back with an imbecile hold on grass, from lunch to dinner. Feebleness of mind and head are the result.

Ever affectionately.

P. S. — The boys have multiplied themselves by fifty daily, and have seemed to appear in hosts (especially in the hottest days) round all the corners at Gad's Hill. I call them the prowlers, and each has a distinguishing name attached, derived from his style of prowling.

CCCCXXIV. ARTHUR SMITH

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, September 3, 1861.

MY DEAR ARTHUR, — I cannot tell you how sorry I am to receive your bad account of your health, or how anxious I shall be to receive a better one as soon as you can possibly give it.

If you go away, don't you think in the main you would be better here than anywhere? You know how well you would be nursed, what care we should take of you, and how perfectly quiet and at home you would be, until you become strong enough to take to the Medway. Moreover, I think you would be less anxious about the tour here than away from such association. I would come to Worthing to fetch you, I need n't say, and would take the most careful charge of you. I will write no more about this, because I wish to avoid giving you more to read than can be helped; but I do sincerely believe it would be at once your wisest and least anxious course. As to a long journey into Wales, or any long journey, it would never do. Nice is not to be thought of. Its dust, and its sharp winds (I know it well), towards October are very bad indeed.

I send you the inclosed letters, firstly, because I have no circular to answer them with, and, secondly, because I fear I might confuse your arrangements by interfering with the correspondence. I shall hope to have a word from you very soon. I am at work for the tour every day, except my town Wednesdays. Ever faithfully.

P. S. — Kindest regards from all.

CCCCXXV. SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, 17th September, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON, — I am delighted with your letter of yesterday — delighted with the addition to the length of the story — delighted with your account of it, and your interest in it — and even *more than* delighted by what you say of our *working in company.*

Not one dissentient voice has reached me respecting it.

hrough the dullest time of the year we held our circulation ost gallantly. And it could not have taken a better hold. I w Forster on Friday (newly returned from thousands of pro- ncial lunatics), and he really was more impressed than I can ll you by what he had seen of it. Just what you say you ink it will turn out to be, *he* was saying, almost in the same ords.

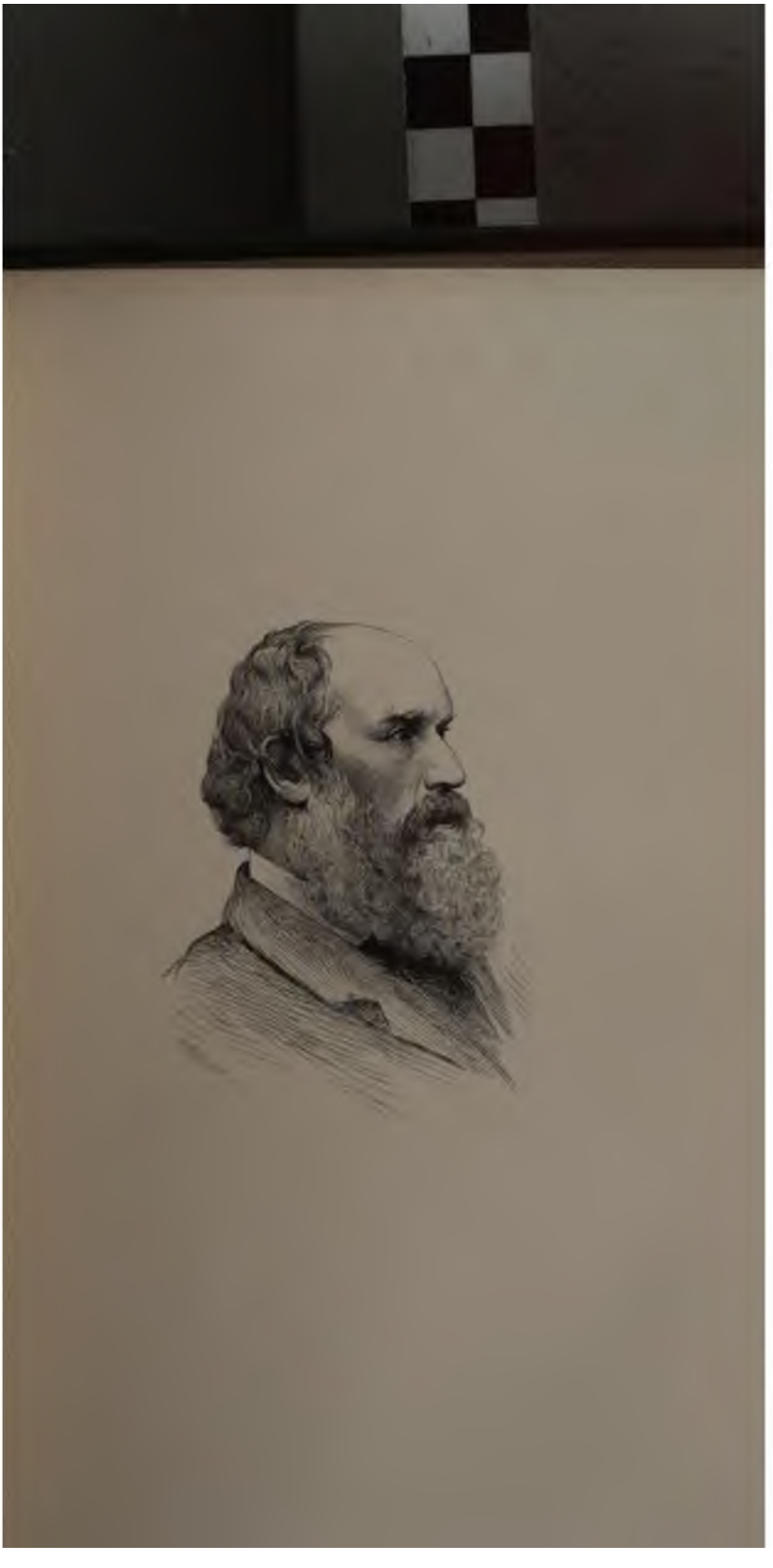
I am burning to get at the whole story, — and you inflame e in the maddest manner by your references to what I don't ow. The exquisite art with which you have changed it, and ve overcome the difficulties of the mode of publication, has rly staggered me. I know pretty well what the difficulties e; and there is no other man who could have done it, I ween.

Ever affectionately.

CCCCXXVI. JOHN WATKINS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Saturday Night, September 28, 1861.

DEAR MR. WATKINS, — In reply to your kind letter I must plain that I have not yet brought down any of your large



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CCCCXXVII. EDMUND YATES

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, October 6, 1861.

MY DEAR EDMUND, — Coming back here to-day, I find your letter.

I was so very much distressed last night in thinking of it all, and I find it so very difficult to preserve my composure when I dwell in my mind on the many times fast approaching when I shall sorely miss the familiar face,[1] that I am hardly steady enough yet to refer to the readings like a man. But your kind reference to them makes me desirous to tell you that I took Headland (formerly of St. Martin's Hall, who has always been with us in London) to conduct the business, when I knew that our poor dear fellow could never do it, even if he had recovered strength to go; and that I consulted with himself about it when I saw him for the last time on earth, and that it seemed to please him, and he said: "We could n't do better."

Write to me before you come; and remember that I go to town Wednesday mornings. Ever faithfully.

CCCCXXVIII. MISS DICKENS

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Thursday, October 10, 1861.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — I received your affectionate little letter here this morning, and was very glad to get it. Poor dear Arthur is a sad loss to me, and indeed I was very fond of him. But the readings must be fought out, like all the rest of life. Ever your affectionate.

CCCCXXIX. W. C. MACREADY

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, October 13, 1861.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — This is a short note. But the moment I know for certain what is designed for me at Cheltenham, I write to you *in order that* you may know it from me *and not by chance from any* one else.

[1] *That of Mr. Arthur Smith,* his business manager and friend.

I am to read there on the evening of Friday, the 3d of January, and on the morning of Saturday, the 4th; as I have nothing to do on Thursday, the 2d, but come from Leamington, I shall come to you, please God, for a quiet dinner that day.

The death of Arthur Smith has caused me great distress and anxiety. I had a great regard for him, and he made the reading part of my life as light and pleasant as it *could* be made. I had hoped to bring him to see you, and had pictured to myself how amused and interested you would have been with his wonderful tact and consummate mastery of arrangement. But it 's all over.

I begin at Norwich on the 28th, and am going north in the middle of November. I am going to do "Copperfield," and shall be curious to test its effect on the Edinburgh people. It has been quite a job so to piece portions of the long book together as to make something continuous out of it; but I hope I have got something varied and dramatic. I am also (not to slight *your* book) going to do "Nickleby at Mr. Squeers's." It is clear that both must be trotted out at Cheltenham.

With kindest love and regard to all your house.

Ever, my dearest Macready, your most affectionate

he went down at seven with me to the dismal den where I dressed, and sat by the fire while I dressed, and was childishly happy in that great privilege! During the reading he sat on a corner of the platform and roared incessantly. He brought in a lady and gentleman to introduce while I was undressing, and went away in a perfect and absolute rapture.

CCCCXXXI. MISS HOGARTH

ROYAL HOTEL, NORWICH, Tuesday, October 29, 1861.

I cannot say that we began well last night. We had not a good hall, and they were a very lumpish audience indeed. This did not tend to cheer the strangeness I felt in being without Arthur, and I was not at all myself.* We have a large let for to-night, I think two hundred and fifty stalls, which is very large, and I hope that both they and I will go better. I could have done perfectly last night, if the audience had been bright; but they were an intent and staring audience. They laughed, though, very well, and the storm made them shake themselves again. But they were not magnetic, and the great big place was out of sorts somehow.

To-morrow I will write you another short note, however short. It is "Nickleby" and the "Trial" to-night; "Copperfield" again to-morrow. A wet day here, with glimpses of blue. I shall not forget Katey's health at dinner. A pleasant journey down.

Ever, my dearest Georgy, your most affectionate.

CCCCXXXII. THE SAME

THE GREAT WHITE HORSE, IPSWICH,
Friday, November 1, 1861.

I cannot quite remember in the whirl of travelling and reading, whether or no I wrote you a line from Bury St. Edmunds. But I think (and hope) I did. We had a fine room there, and "Copperfield" made a great impression. At midday we go on to Colchester, where I shall expect the young Morgans. I sent a telegram on yesterday, after receiving your note, to secure places for them. *The answer* returned by telegraph was: "No *box-seats left but on the fourth* row." If they prefer to sit on *the stage (for I read in the* theatre, there being no other large

public room), they shall. Meantime I have told John, who went forward this morning with the other men, to let the people at the inn know that if three travellers answering that description appear before my dinner-time, they are to dine with me.

Plorn's admission that he likes the school very much indeed is the great social triumph of modern times.

I am looking forward to Sunday's rest at Gad's, and shall be down by the ten o'clock train from town. I miss poor Arthur dreadfully. It is scarcely possible to imagine how much. It is not only that his loss to me socially is quite irreparable, but that the sense I used to have of compactness and comfort about me while I was reading is quite gone. And when I come out for the ten minutes, when I used to find him always ready for me with something cheerful to say, it is forlorn. I cannot but fancy, too, that the audience must miss the old specialty of a pervading gentleman.

Nobody I know has turned up yet except Elwin. I have had many invitations to all sorts of houses in all sorts of places, and have of course accepted them every one.

[redacted]

CCCCXXXIV. MISS DICKENS

FOUNTAIN HOTEL, CANTERBURY,
Windy Night, November 4, 1861.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — A word of report before I go to bed. An excellent house to-night, and an audience positively perfect. The greatest part of it stalls, and an intelligent and delightful response in them, like the touch of a beautiful instrument. "Copperfield" wound up in a real burst of feeling and delight. Ever affectionately.

CCCCXXXV. JOHN AGATE

LORD WARDEN HOTEL, DOVER,
Wednesday, November 6, 1861.

SIR, — I am exceedingly sorry to find, from the letter you have addressed to me, that you had just cause of complaint in being excluded from my reading here last night. It will now and then unfortunately happen when the place of reading is small (as in this case), that some confusion and inconvenience arise from the local agents over-estimating, in perfect good faith and sincerity, the capacity of the room. Such a mistake, I am assured, was made last night; and thus all the available space was filled before the people in charge were at all prepared for that circumstance.

You may readily suppose that I can have no personal knowledge of the proceedings of the people in my employment at such a time. But I wish to assure you very earnestly, that they are all old servants, well acquainted with my principles and wishes, and that they are under the strongest injunction to avoid any approach to mercenary dealing; and to behave to all comers equally with as much consideration and politeness as they know I should myself display. The recent death of a much-regretted friend of mine, who managed this business for me, and on whom these men were accustomed to rely in any little difficulty, caused them (I have no doubt) to feel rather at a loss in your case. Do me the favour to understand that under any other circumstances you would, as a matter of course, have been provided with *any places* whatever that could be found, *without the smallest reference* to what you had originally paid.

This is scanty satisfaction to you, but it is so strictly the truth, that yours is the first complaint of the kind I have ever received.

I hope to read in Dover again, but it is quite impossible that I can make any present arrangement for that purpose. Whenever I may return here, you may be sure I shall not fail to remember that I owe you a recompense for a disappointment. In the mean while I very sincerely regret it.

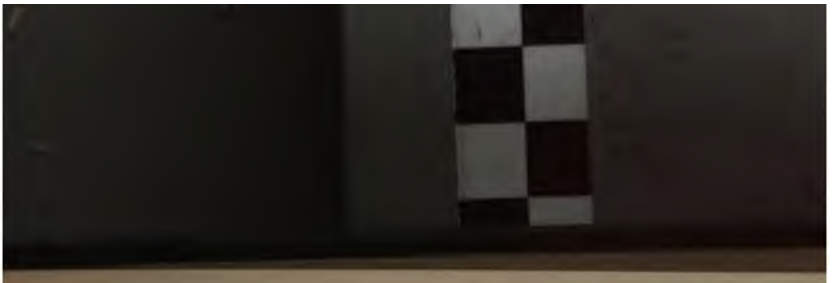
Faithfully yours.

CCCCXXXVI. MISS HOGARTH

BEDFORD HOTEL, BRIGHTON, Thursday, November 7, 1861.

MY DEAR GEORGY, — The Duchess of Cambridge comes to-night to "Copperfield." The bad weather has not in the least touched us, and beyond all doubt a great deal of money has been left untaken at each place.

The storm was most magnificent at Dover. All the great side of The Lord Warden next the sea had to be emptied, the break of the sea was so prodigious, and the noise was so utterly confounding. The sea came in like a great sky of immense



trouble is in every way great. There is rather an alarming breakdown at Newcastle, in respect of all the bills having been, in some inscrutable way, lost on the road. I have resolved to send Berry there, with full powers to do all manner of things, early next week.

The amended route-list is not printed yet, because I am trying to get off Manchester and Liverpool; both of which I strongly doubt, in the present state of American affairs. Therefore I can't send it for Marguerite; but I can, and do, send her my love and God-speed. This is addressed to the office because I suppose you will be there to-morrow.

Ever affectionately.

CCCCXXXVII. MISS MARY BOYLE

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, November 17, 1861.

MY DEAR MARY, — I am perfectly enraptured with the quilt. It is one of the most tasteful, lively, elegant things I have ever seen; and I need not tell you that while it is valuable to me for its own ornamental sake, it is precious to me as a rainbow-hint of your friendship and affectionate remembrance.

Please God you shall see it next summer occupying its allotted place of state in my brand-new bedroom here. You shall behold it then, with all cheerful surroundings, the envy of mankind.

My readings have been doing absolute wonders. Your Duchess and Princess came to hear first "Nickleby" and the "Pickwick Trial," then "Copperfield," at Brighton. I think they were pleased with me, and I am sure I was with them; for they are the very best audience one could possibly desire. I shall always have a pleasant remembrance of them.

On Wednesday I am away again for the longest part of my trip.

Yes, Mary dear, I must say that I like my Carton, and I have a faint idea sometimes that if I had acted him, I could have done something with his life and death.

Believe me, *ever your* affectionate and faithful

JOE.

CCCCXXXVIII. SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

QUEEN'S HEAD HOTEL, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,
Wednesday Night, 20th November, 1861.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON, — I have read here this evening, very attentively, Nos. 19 and 20. I have not the least doubt of the introduced matter; whether considered for its policy, its beauty, or its wise bearing on the story, it is decidedly a great improvement. It is at once very suggestive and very new to have these various points of view presented to the reader's mind.

That the audience is good enough for anything that is well presented to it, I am quite sure.

When you can avoid *notes*, however, and get their substance into the text, it is highly desirable in the case of so large an audience, simply because, as so large an audience necessarily reads the story in small portions, it is of the greater importance that they should retain as much of its argument as possible. Whereas the difficulty of getting numbers of people to read notes (which they invariably regard as interruptions of the text, not as strengtheners or elucidators of it) is wonderful.

Ever affectionately.

CCCCXXXIX. MISS HOGARTH

QUEEN'S HEAD, NEWCASTLE, Friday, November 22, 1861.

I received your letter this morning, and grieve to report that the unlucky Headland has broken down most awfully!

First, as perhaps you remember, this is the place where the bills were "lost" for a week or two. The consequence has been that the agent could not announce all through the "Jenny Lind" time (the most important for announcing), and could but stand still and stare when people came to ask what I was going to read. Last night I read "Copperfield" to the most enthusiastic and appreciative audience imaginable, but in numbers about half what they might have been. To-night we shall have a famous house; but we might have had it last night too. To-morrow (knowing by this time what can, of a certainty, be done with "Copperfield") I had, of course, given out "Copperfield" to be read again. Conceive my amazement and dismay when I

find the printer to have announced "Little Dombey"!!! This, I declare, I had no more intention of reading than I had of reading an account of the solar system. And this, after a sensation last night, of a really extraordinary nature in its intensity and delight!

Says the unlucky Headland to this first head of misery: "Johnson's mistake" (Johnson being the printer).

Second, I read at Edinburgh for the first time — observe the day — *next Wednesday.* Jenny Lind's concert at Edinburgh is to-night. This morning comes a frantic letter from the Edinburgh agent. "I have no bills, no tickets; I lose all the announcement I would have made to hundreds upon hundreds of people to-night, all of the most desirable class to be well informed beforehand. I can't announce what Mr. Dickens is going to read; I can answer no question; I have, upon my responsibility, put a dreary advertisement into the papers announcing that he *is* going to read so many times, and that particulars will shortly be ready; and I stand bound hand and foot." "Johnson's mistake," says the unlucky Headland.

Of course, I know that the man who never made a mistake in poor Arthur's time is not likely to be always making mistakes now. But I have written by this post to Wills, to go to him and investigate. I have also detached Berry from here, and have sent him on by train at a few minutes' notice to Edinburgh, and then to Glasgow (where I have no doubt everything is wrong too). Glasgow we may save; Edinburgh I hold to be irretrievably damaged. If it can be picked up at all, it can only be at the loss of the two first nights, and by the expenditure of no end of spirits and force. And this is the harder because it is impossible not to see that the last readings polished and prepared the audiences in general, and that I have not to work them up in any place where I have been before, but that they start with a London intelligence, and with a respect and preparation for what they are going to hear.

I hope by the time you and Mamie come to me, we shall have got into some good method. I must take the thing more into my own hands and look after it from hour to hour. If such a thing as this Edinburgh business could have happened under poor Arthur, *I really believe* he would have fallen into a *fit, or gone distracted.* No one can ever know what he was but *I who have been with him* and without him. Headland is so

anxious and so good-tempered that I cannot be very stormy with him; but it is the simple fact that he has no notion of the requirements of such work as this. Without him, and with a larger salary to Berry (though there are objections to the latter as *first* man), I could have done a hundred times better.

As Forster will have a strong interest in knowing all about the proceedings, perhaps you will send him this letter to read. There is no very tremendous harm, indeed, done as yet. At Edinburgh I KNOW what I can do with "Copperfield." I think it is not too much to say that for every one who does come to hear it on the first night, I can get back fifty on the second. And whatever can be worked up there will tell on Glasgow. Berry I shall continue to send on ahead, and I shall take nothing on trust and more as being done.

On Sunday morning at six, I have to start for Berwick. From Berwick, in the course of that day, I will write again; to Mamie next time.

With best love to her and Mrs. B.

CCCCXL. MISS DICKENS

"But there stood the master," he did me the honour to say afterwards, in addressing the rest, "as cool as ever I see him a lounging at a railway station."

A telegram from Berry at Edinburgh yesterday evening, to say that he had got the bills, and that they would all be up and dispersed yesterday evening under his own eyes. So no time was lost in setting things as right as they can be set. He has now gone on to Glasgow.

P. S. — Duty to Mrs. Bouncer.

CCCCXLI. MISS HOGARTH

BERWICK-ON-TWEED, Monday, November 25, 1861.

I write (in a gale of wind, with a high sea running), to let you know that we go on to Edinburgh at half-past eight to-morrow morning.

A most ridiculous room was designed for me in this odd out-of-the-way place. An immense Corn Exchange made of glass and iron, round, dome-topped, lofty, utterly absurd for any such purpose, and full of thundering echoes, with a little lofty crow's-nest of a stone gallery breast-high, deep in the wall, into which it was designed to put *me!* I instantly struck, of course, and said I would either read in a room attached to this house (a very snug one, capable of holding five hundred people), or not at all. Terrified local agents glowered, but fell prostrate.

Berry has this moment come back from Edinburgh and Glasgow with hopeful accounts. He seems to have done the business extremely well, and he says that it was quite curious and cheering to see how the Glasgow people assembled round the bills the instant they were posted, and evidently with a great interest in them.

We left Newcastle yesterday morning in the dark, when it was intensely cold and froze very hard. So it did here. But towards night the wind went round to the S. W., and all night it has been blowing very hard indeed. So it is now.

Tell Mamie that I have the same sitting-room as we had when we came here with poor Arthur, and that my bedroom is the room out of it which she and Katie had. Surely it is the oddest town to read in! But it is taken on poor Arthur's principle that a place in the way pays the expenses of a through

journey; and the people would seem to be coming up to the scratch gallantly. It was a dull Sunday, though; oh, it *was* a dull Sunday, without a book! For I had forgotten to buy one at Newcastle, until it was too late. So after dark I made a jug of whiskey punch, and drowned the unlucky Headland's remembrance of his failures.

I shall hope to hear very soon that the workmen have "broken through," and that you have been in the state apartments, and that upholstery measurements have come off.

There has been a horrible accident in Edinburgh. One of the seven-story old houses in the High Street fell when it was full of people. Berry was at the bill-poster's house, a few doors off, waiting for him to come home, when he heard what seemed like thunder, and then the air was darkened with dust, "as if an immense quantity of steam had been blown off," and then all that dismal quarter set up shrieks, which he says were most dreadful.

CCCCXLII. MISS DICKENS

fallen building yesterday. They were still at work trying to find two men (brothers), a young girl, and an old woman, known to be all lying there. On the walls two or three common clocks are still hanging; one of them, judging from the time at which it stopped, would seem to have gone for an hour or so after the fall. Great interest had been taken in a poor linnet in a cage, hanging in the wind and rain high up against the broken wall. A fireman got it down alive, and great exultation had been raised over it. One woman, who was dug out unhurt, staggered into the street, stared all round her, instantly ran away, and has never been heard of since. It is a most extraordinary sight, and of course makes a great sensation.

CCCCXLIII. MISS DICKENS

WATERLOO HOTEL, EDINBURGH, Friday, November 29, 1861.

I think it is my turn to write to you, and I therefore send a brief despatch, like a telegram, to let you know that in a gale of wind and a fierce rain, last night, we turned away a thousand people. There was no getting into the hall, no getting near the hall, no stirring among the people, no getting out, no possibility of getting rid of them. And yet, in spite of all that, and of their being steaming wet, they never flagged for an instant, never made a complaint, and took up the trial upon their very shoulders, to the last word, in a triumphant roar.

The talk about "Copperfield" rings through the whole place. It is done again to-morrow night. To-morrow morning I read "Dombey." To-morrow morning is Grisi's "farewell" morning concert, and last night was her "farewell" evening concert. Neither she, nor Jenny Lind, nor anything, nor anybody seems to make the least effect on the draw of the readings.

I lunch with Blackwood to-day. He was at the reading last night; a capital audience. Young Blackwood has also called here. A very good young fellow, I think.

CCCCXLIV. MISS HOGARTH

CARRICK'S ROYAL HOTEL, GLASGOW,
Tuesday, December 3, 1861.

I send you by this post another "Scotsman." From a paragraph in it, a letter, and an advertisement, you may be able to

form some dim guess of the scene at Edinburgh last night. Such a pouring of hundreds into a place already full to the throat, such indescribable confusion, such a rending and tearing of dresses, and yet such a scene of good humour on the whole. I never saw the faintest approach to it. While I addressed the crowd in the room, Gordon addressed the crowd in the street. Fifty frantic men got up in all parts of the hall and addressed me all at once. Other frantic men made speeches to the walls. The whole Blackwood family were borne in on the top of a wave, and landed with their faces against the front of the platform. I read with the platform crammed with people. I got them to lie down upon it, and it was like some impossible tableau or gigantic picnic; one pretty girl in full dress lying on her side all night, holding on to one of the legs of my table. It was the most extraordinary sight. And yet from the moment I began to the moment of my leaving off, they never missed a point, and they ended with a burst of cheers.

The confusion was decidedly owing to the local agents. But I think it may have been a little heightened by Headland's way of sending them the tickets to sell in the first instance.

CCCCXLV. W. H. WILLS

VICTORIA HOTEL, PRESTON, Friday, December 13, 1861.

MY DEAR WILLS, — The news of the Christmas number is indeed glorious, and nothing can look brighter or better than the prospects of the illustrious publication.

Both Carlisle and Lancaster have come out admirably, though I doubted both, as you did. But, unlike you, I always doubted this place. I do so still. It is a poor place at the best (you remember ?), and the mills are working half time, and trade is very bad. The expenses, however, will be a mere nothing. The accounts from Manchester for to-morrow, and from Liverpool for the readings generally, are very cheering indeed.

The young lady who sells the papers at the station is just the same as ever. Has orders for to-night, and is coming "with a person." "*The* person ?" said I. "Never *you* mind," said she.

I was so charmed with Robert Chambers's "Traditions of Edinburgh" (which I read *in* Edinburgh), that I was obliged to write to him and say so.

Glasgow finished nobly, and the last night in Edinburgh was signally successful and positively splendid.

Will you give my small Admiral, on his personal application, one sovereign ? I have told him to come to you for that recognition of his meritorious services.

Ever faithfully.

CCCCXLVI. THE SAME

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Sunday, December 15, 1861.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I sent you a telegram to-day, and I write before the answer has come to hand.

I have been very doubtful what to do here. We have a great let for to-morrow night. The mayor recommends closing to-morrow, and going on on Tuesday and Wednesday, so does the town clerk, so do the agents. But I have a misgiving that they hardly understand what the public general sympathy with the Queen will be. Further, I feel personally that the Queen has always been very considerate and gracious to me, and I

would on no account do anything that might seem unfeeling or disrespectful. I shall attach great weight, in this state of indecision, to your telegram.

A capital audience at Preston. Not a capacious room, but full. Great appreciation.

The scene at Manchester last night was really magnificent. I had had the platform carried forward to our "Frozen Deep" point, and my table and screen built in with a proscenium and room scenery. When I went in (there was a very fine hall), they applauded in the most tremendous manner; and the extent to which they were taken aback and taken by storm by "Copperfield" was really a thing to see.

The post closes early here on a Sunday, and I shall close this also without further reference to "a message from the" W. H. W. being probably on the road.

Radley is ill, and supposed to be fast declining, poor fellow. The house is crammed, the assizes on, and troops perpetually embarking for Canada, and their officers passing through the hotel.

Kindest regards, ever faithfully.

trustfulness. It will never be so full of wine as it is to-day of affectionate regard.

Ever faithfully yours.

CCCCXLVIII. MISS HOGARTH

CHELTENHAM, Friday, January 3, 1862.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — Mrs. Macready in voice is very like poor Mrs. Macready dead and gone; not in the least like her otherwise. She is perfectly satisfactory, and exceedingly winning. Quite perfect in her manner with him and in her ease with his children, sensible, gay, pleasant, sweet-tempered; not in the faintest degree stiff or pedantic; accessible instantly. I have very rarely seen a more agreeable woman. The house is (on a smaller scale) any house we have known them in. Furnished with the old furniture, pictures, engravings, mirrors, tables, and chairs. Butty is too tall for strength, I am afraid, but handsome, with a face of great power and character, and a very nice girl. Katie you know all about. Macready, decidedly much older and infirm. Very much changed. His old force has gone out of him strangely. I don't think I left off talking a minute from the time of my entering the house to my going to bed last night, and he was as much amused and interested as ever I saw him; still he was, and is, unquestionably aged.

And even now I am obliged to cut this letter short by having to go and look after Headland. It would never do to be away from the rest of them. I have no idea what we are doing here; no notion whether things are right or wrong; no conception where the room is; no hold of the business at all. For which reason I cannot rest without going and looking after the worthy man.

CCCCXLIX. THE SAME

TORQUAY, Wednesday, January 8, 1862.

You know, I think, that I was very averse to going to Plymouth, and would not have gone there again but for poor Arthur. But on the last night I read "Copperfield," and positively enthralled the people. It was a most overpowering effect, and poor Andrew[1] came behind the screen, after the

[1] Lieutenant Andrew Gordon, R. N., son of the Sheriff of Midlothian.

storm, and cried in the best and manliest manner. Also there were two or three lines of his shipmates and other sailors, and they were extraordinarily affected. But its culminating effect was on Macready at Cheltenham. When I got home after "Copperfield," I found him quite unable to speak, and able to do nothing but square his dear old jaw all on one side, and roll his eyes (half closed), like Jackson's picture of him. And when I said something light about it, he returned: "No — er — Dickens! I swear to Heaven that, as a piece of passion and playfulness — er — indescribably mixed up together, it does — er — no, really, Dickens! — amaze me as profoundly as it moves me. But as a piece of art — and you know — er — that I — no, Dickens! By ——! have seen the best art in a great time — it is incomprehensible to me. How is it got at — er — how is it done — er — how one man can — well? It lays me on my — er — back, and it is of no use talking about it!" With which he put his hand upon my breast and pulled out his pocket-handkerchief, and I felt as if I were doing somebody to his Werner. Katie, by the bye, is a wonderful audience, and has a great fund of wild feeling in her. Johnny not at all unlike

CCCCL. SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday, 24th January, 1862.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON, — I have considered your questions, and here follow my replies.

1. I think you undoubtedly *have* the right to forbid the turning of your play into an opera.

2. I do *not* think the production of such an opera in the slightest degree likely to injure the play or to render it a less valuable property than it is now. If it could have any effect on so standard and popular a work as "The Lady of Lyons," the effect would, in my judgment, be beneficial. But I believe the play to be high above any such influence.

3. Assuming you do consent to the adaptation, in a desire to oblige Oxenford, I would not recommend your asking any pecuniary compensation. This for two reasons: firstly, because the compensation could only be small at the best; secondly, because your taking it would associate you (unreasonably, but not the less assuredly) with the opera.

The only objection I descry is purely one of feeling. Pauline trotting about in front of the float, invoking the orchestra with a limp pocket-handkerchief, is a notion that makes goose-flesh of my back. Also a yelping tenor going away to the wars in a scene half an hour long is painful to contemplate. Damas, too, as a bass, with a grizzled bald head, blatantly bellowing about

> Years long ago,
> When the sound of the drum
> First made his blood glow
> With a rum ti tum tum —

rather sticks in my throat; but there really seems to me to be no other objection, if you can get over this.

Ever affectionately.

CCCCLI. THE MISSES ARMSTRONG

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, February 10, 1862.

MY DEAR GIRLS, — For if I were to write "young friends," it would look like a schoolmaster; and if I were to write

"young ladies," it would look like a schoolmistress; and worse than that, neither form of words would look familiar and natural, or in character with our snowy ride that tooth-chattering morning.

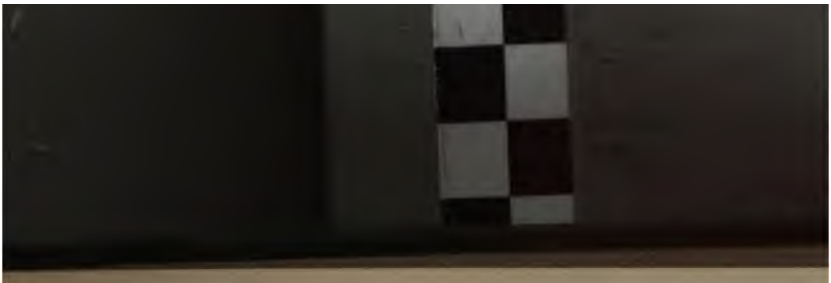
I cannot tell you both how gratified I was by your remembrance, or how often I think of you as I smoke the admirable cigars. But I almost think you must have had some magnetic consciousness across the Atlantic of my whiffing my love towards you from the garden here.

My daughter says that when you have settled those little public affairs at home, she hopes you will come back to England (possibly in united states) and give a minute or two to this part of Kent. *Her* words are, "a day or two;" but I remember your Italian flights, and correct the message.

I have only just now finished my country readings, and have had nobody to make breakfast for me since the remote ages of Colchester!

Ever faithfully yours.

CCCCLII. M. DE CERJAT



delicacies with which he rendered his conception clear were extremely subtile; and in particular he avoided that brutality towards Ophelia which, with a greater or less amount of coarseness, I have seen in all other Hamlets. As a mere *tour de force*, it would have been very remarkable in its disclosure of a perfectly wonderful knowledge of the force of the English language; but its merit was far beyond and above this. Foreign accent, of course, but not at all a disagreeable one. And he was so obviously safe and at ease, that you were never in pain for him as a foreigner. Add to this a perfectly picturesque and romantic "make-up," and a remorseless destruction of all conventionalities, and you have the leading virtues of the impersonation. In Othello he did not succeed. In Iago he is very good. He is an admirable artist, and far beyond any one on our stage. A real artist and a gentleman.

Last Thursday I began reading again in London — a condensation of "Copperfield," and "Mr. Bob Sawyer's Party," from "Pickwick," to finish merrily. The success of "Copperfield" is astounding. It made an impression that *I* must not describe. I may only remark that I was half dead when I had done; and that although I had looked forward, all through the summer, when I was carefully getting it up, to its being a London sensation; and that although Macready, hearing it at Cheltenham, told me to be prepared for a great effect, it even went beyond my hopes. I read again next Thursday, and the rush for places is quite furious. Tell Townshend this with my love, if you see him before I have time to write to him; and tell him that I thought the people would never let me go away, they became so excited, and showed it so very warmly. I am trying to plan out a new book, but have not got beyond trying.

Yours affectionately.

CCCCLIII. WALTER THORNBURY

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Friday, April 18, 1862.

MY DEAR THORNBURY, — The Bow Street runners ceased out of the land soon after the introduction of the new police. I remember them very well as standing about the door of the office in Bow Street. They had no other uniform than a blue dress-coat, brass buttons (I am not even now sure that that was

necessary), and a bright red cloth waistcoat. The waistcoat was indispensable, and the slang name for them was "red-breast," in consequence.

They kept company with thieves and the like, much more than the detective police do. I don't know what their pay was, but I have no doubt their principal complements were got under the rose. It was a very slack institution, and its headquarters were The Brown Bear, in Bow Street, a public-house of more than doubtful reputation, opposite the police-office; and either the house which is now the theatrical costume-maker's, or the next door to it.

Field, who advertises the Secret Inquiry Office, was a Bow Street runner, and can tell you all about it; Goddard, who also advertises an inquiry office, was another of the fraternity. They are the only two I know of as yet existing in a "questionable shape."

Faithfully yours always.

CCCCLIV. MR. BAYLIS

GAD'S HILL, etc., Wednesday, July 2, 1862.

with apprehension. The necessity of providing change for her will probably take us across the water very early in the autumn; and this again unsettles home schemes here, and withers many kinds of fern. If they knew (by "they" I mean my daughter and Miss Hogarth) that I was writing to you, they would charge me with many messages of regard. But as I am shut up in my room in a ferocious and unapproachable condition, owing to the great accumulation of letters I have to answer, I will tell them at lunch that I have anticipated their wish. As I know they have bills for me to pay, and are at present shy of producing them, I wish to preserve a gloomy and repellent reputation.

My dear Mr. Baylis, faithfully yours always.

CCCCLV. MRS. HENRY AUSTIN

GAD'S HILL, Tuesday, October 7, 1862.

I do not preach consolation, because I am unwilling to preach at any time, and know my own weakness too well. But in this world there is no stay but the hope of a better, and no reliance but on the mercy and goodness of God. Through those two harbours of a shipwrecked heart, I fully believe that you will, in time, find a peaceful resting-place even on this careworn earth. Heaven speed the time, and do you try hard to help it on! It is impossible to say but that our prolonged grief for the beloved dead may grieve them in their unknown abiding-place, and give them trouble. The one influencing consideration in all you do as to your disposition of yourself (coupled, of course, with a real earnest strenuous endeavour to recover the lost tone of spirit) is, that you think and feel you *can* do. I do not in the least regard your change of course in going to Havre as any evidence of instability. But I rather hope it is likely that through such restlessness you will come to a far quieter frame of mind. The disturbed mind and affections, like the tossed sea, seldom calm without an intervening time of confusion and trouble.

But nothing is to be attained without striving. In a determined effort to settle the thoughts, to parcel out the day, to find occupation regularly or to make it, to be up and doing something, are chiefly to be found the mere mechanical means which must come to the aid of the best mental efforts.

It is a wilderness of a day here, in the way of blowing and

raining, and as darkly dismal, at four o'clock, as need be. My head is but just now raised from a day's writing, but I will not lose the post without sending you a word.

Katie was here yesterday, just come back from Clara White's (that was), in Scotland. In the midst of her brilliant fortune, it is too clear to me that she is already beckoned away to follow her dead sisters. Macready was here from Saturday evening to yesterday morning, older but looking wonderfully well, and (what is very rare in these times) with the old thick sweep of hair upon his head. Georgina being left alone here the other day was done no good to by a great consternation among the servants. On going down stairs, she found Marsh (the stableman) seated with great dignity and anguish in an armchair, and incessantly crying out: "I am dead." To which the women servants said with great pathos (and with some appearance of reason): "No, you ain't, Marsh!" And to which he persisted in replying: "Yes, I am; I am dead!" Some neighbouring vagabond was impressed to drive a cart over to Rochester and fetch the doctor, who said (the patient and his consolers being all very anxious that the heart should be the

and do your work. I am quite confident that, with your notes and a few words of explanation, I could take it up at any time and do it. Absurdly unnecessary to say that it would be a makeshift! But I could do it at a pinch, so like you as that no one should find out the difference. Don't make much of this offer in your mind; it is nothing, except to ease it. If you should want help, I am as safe as the bank. The trouble would be nothing to me, and the triumph of overcoming a difficulty great. Think it a Christmas number, an "Idle Apprentice," a "Lighthouse," a "Frozen Deep." I am as ready as in any of these cases to strike in and hammer the hot iron out.

You won't want me. You will be well (and thankless!) in no time. But there I am; and I hope that the knowledge may be a comfort to you. Call me, and I come.

As Beard always has a sense of medical responsibility, and says anything important about a patient in confidence, I have merely remarked here that "Wilkie" is out of sorts. Charley (who is here with Katie) has no other cue from me.

Ever affectionately.

CCCCLVII. CHARLES FECHTER

PARIS, RUE DU FAUBOURG ST. HONORÉ, 27,
Tuesday, November 4, 1862.

MY DEAR FECHTER, — You know, I believe, how our letters crossed, and that I am here until Christmas. Also, you know with what pleasure and readiness I should have responded to your invitation if I had been in London.

Pray tell Paul Féval that I shall be charmed to know him, and that I shall feel the strongest interest in making his acquaintance. It almost puts me out of humour with Paris (and it takes a great deal to do that!) to think that I was not at home to prevail upon him to come with you, and be welcomed to Gad's Hill; but either there or here, I hope to become his friend before this present old year is out. Pray tell him so.

You say nothing in your note of your Lyceum preparations. I trust they are all going on well. There is a fine opening for you, I am sure, with a *good* beginning; but the importance of a *good beginning is very great.* If you ever have time and *inclination to tell me in a short* note what you are about, you

can scarcely interest me more, as my wishes and strongest sympathies are for and with your success — *mais cela va sans dire.*

I went to the Châtelet (a beautiful theatre!) the other night to see "Rothomago," but was so mortally *gêné* with the poor nature of the piece and of the acting, that I came out again when there was a week or two (I mean an hour or two, but the hours seemed weeks) yet to get through.

My dear Fechter, very faithfully yours always.

CCCCLVIII. MRS. HENRY AUSTIN

PARIS, RUE DU FAUBOURG ST. HONORÉ, 27,
Friday, 7th November, 1862.

MY DEAR LETITIA, — I should have written to you from here sooner, but for having been constantly occupied.

Your improved account of yourself is very cheering and hopeful. Through determined occupation and action lies the way. Be sure of it.

I came over to France before Georgina and Mary, and went to Boulogne to meet them coming in by the steamer on the great Sunday — the day of the storm. I stood (holding on

officer from Chatham whom they knew very well (when dry), just married and going to India! So they all set up housekeeping together at Dessin's at Calais (where I am well known), and looked as if they had been passing a mild summer there.

We have a pretty apartment here, but house-rent is awful to mention. Mrs. Bouncer (muzzled by the Parisian police) is also here, and is a wonderful spectacle to behold in the streets, restrained like a raging Lion.

I learn from an embassy here, that the Emperor has just made an earnest proposal to our Government to unite with France (and Russia, if Russia will) in an appeal to America to stop the brutal war. Our Government's answer is not yet received, but I think I clearly perceive that the proposal will be declined, on the ground "that the time has not yet come."

Ever affectionately.

CCCCLIX. CHARLES FECHTER

PARIS, Saturday, December 6, 1862.

MY DEAR FECHTER, — I have read "The White Rose" attentively, and think it an extremely good play. It is vigorously written, with a great knowledge of the stage, and presents many striking situations. I think the close particularly fine, impressive, bold, and new.

But I greatly doubt the expediency of your doing *any* historical play early in your management. By the words "historical play," I mean a play founded on any incident in English history. Our public are accustomed to associate historical plays with Shakespeare. In any other hands, I believe they care very little for crowns and dukedoms. What you want is something with an interest of a more domestic and general nature — an interest as romantic as you please, but having a more general and wider response than a disputed succession to the throne can have for Englishmen at this time of day. Such interest culminated in the last Stuart, and has worn itself out. It would be up-hill work to evoke an interest in Perkin Warbeck.

I do not doubt the play's being well received, but my fear is that these people would be looked upon as mere abstractions, and would have but a *cold welcome* in consequence, and would not lay *hold of your audience*. Now, when you *have* laid hold of *your audience and have accustomed* them to your theatre, you

may produce " The White Rose " with far greater justice to the author and to the manager also. Wait. Feel your way. Perkin Warbeck is too far removed from analogy with the sympathies and lives of the people for a beginning.

My dear Fechter, ever faithfully yours.

CCCCLX. MISS MARY BOYLE

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Saturday, December 27, 1862.

MY DEAR MARY, — I must send you my Christmas greeting and Happy New Year wishes in return for yours; most heartily and fervently reciprocating your interest and affection. You are among the few whom I most care for and best love.

Being in London two evenings in the opening week, I tried to persuade my legs (for whose judgment I have the highest respect) to go to an evening party. But I *could not* induce them to pass Leicester Square. The faltering presentiment under which they laboured so impressed me, that at that point I yielded to their terrors. They immediately ran away to the

report my safe (and neuralgic) arrival here. My little rooms are perfectly comfortable, and I like the hotel better than any I have ever put up at in Paris. John's amazement at and appreciation of Paris are indescribable. He goes about with his mouth open, staring at everything and being tumbled over by everybody.

The state dinner at the Embassy, yesterday, coming off in the room where I am to read, the carpenters did not get in until this morning. But their platforms were ready — or supposed to be — and the preparations are in brisk progress. I think it will be a handsome affair to look at — a very handsome one. There seems to be great artistic curiosity in Paris to know what kind of thing the reading is.

I know a "rela-shon" (with one weak eye), who is in the gunmaking line, very near here. There is a strong family resemblance — but no muzzle. Lady Molesworth and I have not begun to "toddle" yet, but have exchanged affectionate greetings. I am going round to see her presently, and I dine with her on Sunday. The only remaining news is, that I am beset by mysterious adorers, and smuggle myself in and out of the house in the meanest and basest manner.

With kind regard to Mr. and Mrs. Humphery,

Ever, my dearest Mamey, your affectionate father.

P. S. — *Hommage à Madame B.!*

CCCCLXII. MONSIEUR REGNIER

PARIS, Sunday, February 1, 1863.

MY DEAR REGNIER, — I was charmed by the receipt of your cordial and sympathetic letter, and I shall always preserve it carefully as a most noble tribute from a great and real artist.

I wished you had been at the Embassy on Friday evening. The audience was a fine one, and the "Carol" is particularly well adapted to the purpose. It is an uncommon pleasure to me to learn that I am to meet you on Tuesday, for there are not many men whom I meet with greater pleasure than you. Heaven! how the years roll by! We are quite old friends now, in counting by *years*. If we add sympathies, we have *been friends at least a thousand* years.

Affectionately yours ever.

CCCCLXIII. MISS DICKENS

HÔTEL DU HELDER, PARIS, Sunday, February 1, 1863.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — I cannot give you any idea of the success of the readings here, because no one can imagine the scene of last Friday night at the Embassy. Such audiences and such enthusiasm I have never seen, but the thing culminated on Friday night in a two hours' storm of excitement and pleasure. They actually recommenced and applauded right away into their carriages and down the street.

You know your parent's horror of being lionised, and will not be surprised to hear that I am half dead of it. I cannot leave here until Thursday (though I am every hour in danger of running away) because I have to dine out, to say nothing of breakfasting — think of me breakfasting! — every intervening day. But my project is to send John home on Thursday, and then to go on a little perfectly quiet tour for about ten days, touching the sea at Boulogne. When I get there, I will write to your aunt (in case you should not be at home), saying when

that noble and sad story is most nobly and sadly rendered, and perfectly delighted me. But I think it requires too much of the audience to do for a London opera-house. The composer must be a very remarkable man indeed. Some management of light throughout the story is also very poetical and fine. We had Carvalho's box. I could hardly bear the thing, it affected me so.

But, as a certain Frenchman said, "No weakness, Danton!" So I leave off.

CCCCLXV. CHARLES FECHTER

PARIS, Wednesday, February 4, 1863.

MY DEAR FECHTER, — A thousand congratulations on your great success! Never mind what they say, or do, *pour vous écraser;* you have the game in your hands. The romantic drama, thoroughly well done (with a touch of Shakespeare now and then) is the specialty of your theatre. Give the public the picturesque, romantic drama, with yourself in it; and (as I told you in the beginning) you may throw down your gauntlet in defiance of all comers.

It is a most brilliant success indeed, and it thoroughly rejoices my heart!

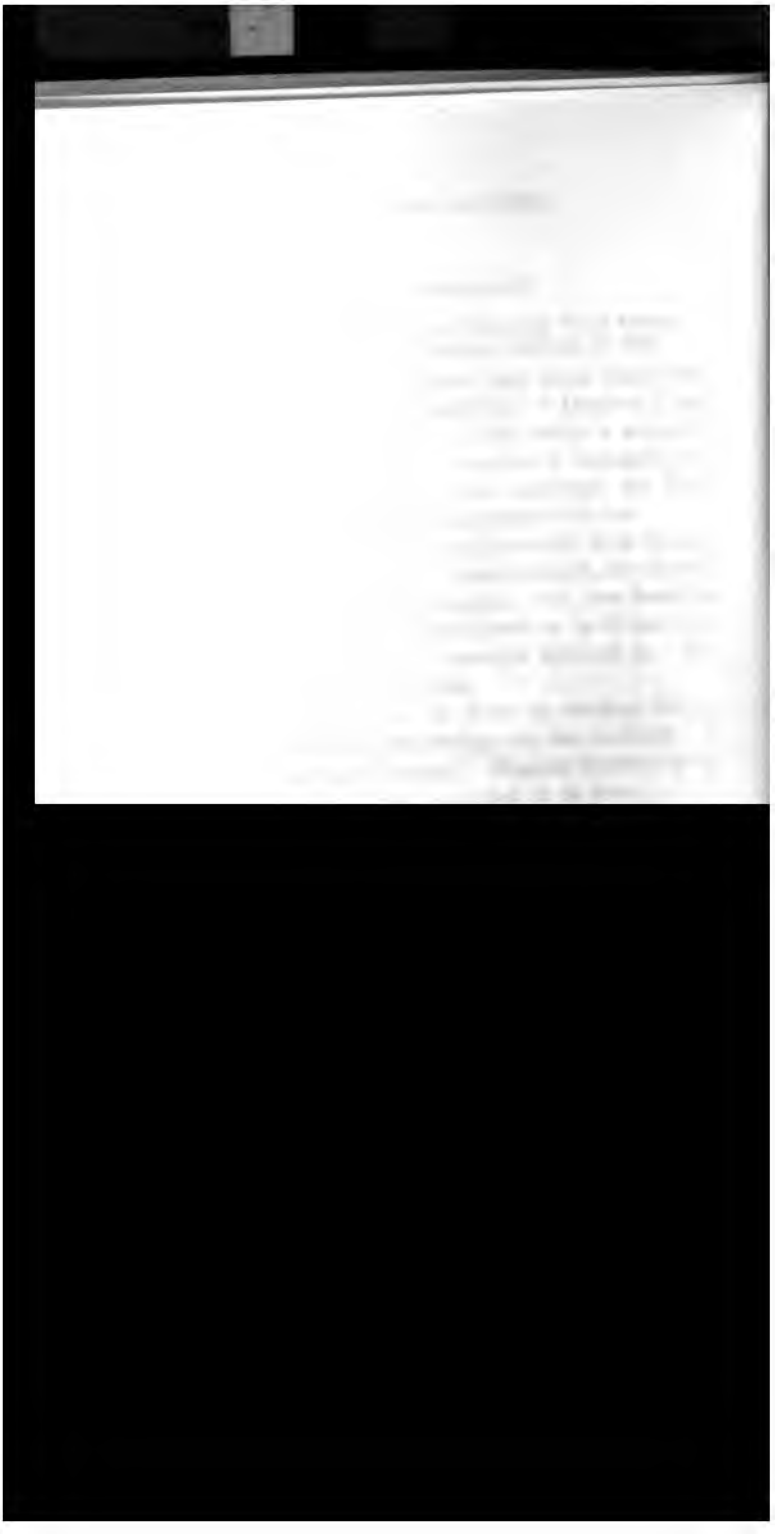
Unfortunately I cannot now hope to see "Maquet," because I am packing up and going out to dinner (it is late in the afternoon), and I leave to-morrow morning when all sensible people, except myself, are in bed; and I do not come back to Paris or near it. I had hoped to see him at breakfast last Monday, but he was not there. Paul Féval was there, and I found him a capital fellow. If I can do anything to help you on with "Maquet" [1] when I come back I will most gladly do it.

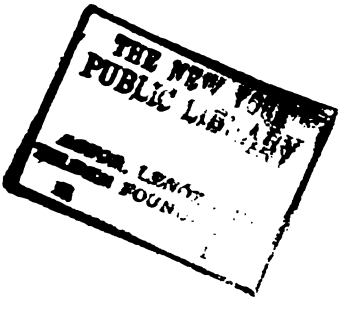
My readings here have had the finest possible reception, and have achieved a most noble success. I never before read to such fine audiences, so very quick of perception, and so enthusiastically responsive.

I shall be heartily pleased to see you again, my dear Fechter, and to share your triumphs with the real earnestness of a real friend. And so go on and prosper, and believe me, as I truly am,

Most cordially yours.

[1] *Alluding to a translation of a play by M. Maquet, which M. Fechter was then preparing for his theatre.*

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ing of the day when the theatre opened, surrounded by shavings and carpenters, and (of course) with that inevitable hammer going; and I told Fechter, "That is the very best piece of womanly tenderness I have ever seen on the stage, and you 'll find that no audience can miss it." It is a comfort to add that it was instantly seized upon, and is much talked of.

Stanfield was very ill for some months, then suddenly picked up, and is really rosy and jovial again. Going to see him when he was very despondent, I told him the story of Fechter's piece (then in rehearsal) with appropriate action; fighting a duel with the washing-stand, defying the bedstead, and saving the life of the sofa-cushion. This so kindled his old theatrical ardour, that I think he turned the corner on the spot.

With love to Mrs. Macready and Katie, and (be still, my heart!) Benvenuta, and the exiled Johnny (not too attentive at school, I hope?), and the personally unknown young Parr,

Ever, my dearest Macready, your most affectionate.

CCCCLXVII. MISS POWER

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Thursday, February 26, 1863.

MY DEAR MARGUERITE, — I think I have found a first-rate title for your book, with an early and a delightful association in most people's minds, and a strong suggestion of Oriental pictures: —

"ARABIAN DAYS AND NIGHTS."

I have sent it to Low's. If they have the wit to see it, do you in your first chapter touch that string, so as to bring a fanciful explanation in aid of the title, and sound it afterwards, now and again, when you come to anything where Haroun al Raschid, and the Grand Vizier, and Mesrour, the chief of the guard, and any of that wonderful *dramatis personæ* are vividly brought to mind.

Ever affectionately.

CCCCLXVIII. CHARLES KNIGHT

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Wednesday, March 4, 1863.

MY DEAR CHARLES KNIGHT, — At a quarter to seven on Monday, the 16th, a stately form will be descried breathing

birthday cordialities and affectionate amenities, as it descends the broken and gently dipping ground by which the level country of the Clifton Road is attained. A practised eye will be able to discern two humble figures in attendance, which from their flowing crinolines may, without exposing the prophet to the imputation of rashness, be predicted to be women. Though certes their importance, absorbed and as it were swallowed up in the illustrious bearing and determined purpose of the maturer stranger, will not enthrall the gaze that wanders over the forest of San Giovanni as the night gathers in.

Ever affectionately,

G. P. R. JAMES.

CCCCLXIX. MRS. LEHMANN

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
No. 26, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W. C.,
Tuesday, March 10, 1863.

DEAR MRS. LEHMANN, — Two stalls for to-morrow's reading were sent to you by post before I heard from you this morning. Two will always come to you while you remain at Gummidge, and I hope I need not say that if you want more, none could be better bestowed in my sight.

Pray tell Lehmann, when you next write to him, that I find I owe him a mint of money for the delightful Swedish sleigh-bells. They are the wonder, awe, and admiration of the whole country-side, and I never go out without them.

Let us make an exchange of child stories. I heard of a little fellow the other day whose mamma had been telling him that a French governess was coming over to him from Paris, and had been expatiating on the blessings and advantages of having foreign tongues. After leaning his plump little cheek against the window glass in a dreary little way for some minutes, he looked round and inquired in a general way, and not as if it had any special application, whether she did n't think "that the Tower of Babel was a great mistake altogether?"

Ever faithfully yours.

CCCCLXX. MRS. MAJOR[1]

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
26, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,
Thursday, March 12, 1863.

MY DEAR MARY, — I am quite concerned to hear that you and your party (including your brother Willie) paid for seats at my reading last night. You must promise me never to do so any more. My old affections and attachments are not so lightly cherished or so easily forgotten as that I can bear the thought of you and yours coming to hear me like so many strangers. It will at all times delight me if you will send a little note to me, or to Georgina, or to Mary, saying when you feel inclined to come, and how many stalls you want. You may always be certain, even on the fullest nights, of room being made for you. And I shall always be interested and pleased by knowing that you are present.

Mind! You are to be exceedingly penitent for last night's offence, and to make me a promise that it shall never be repeated. On which condition accept my noble forgiveness.

With kind regard to Mr. Major, my dear Mary,

Affectionately yours.

CCCCLXXI. W. C. MACREADY

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Thursday, March 31, 1863.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — I mean to go on reading into June. For the sake of the finer effects (in "Copperfield" principally), I have changed from St. James's Hall to the Hanover Square Room. The latter is quite a wonderful room for sound, and so easy that the least inflection will tell anywhere in the place exactly as it leaves your lips; but I miss my dear old shilling galleries — six or eight hundred strong — with a certain roaring sea of response in them, that you have stood upon the beach of many and many a time.

The summer, I hope and trust, will quicken the pace at which you grow stronger again. I am but in dull spirits myself just now, or I should remonstrate with you on your slowness.

[1] Formerly Miss Talfourd.

Having two little boys sent home from school "to see the illuminations" on the marriage-night, I chartered an enormous van, at a cost of five pounds, and we started in majesty from the office in London, fourteen strong. We crossed Waterloo Bridge with the happy design of beginning the sight at London Bridge, and working our way through the City to Regent Street. In a bye-street in the Borough, over against a dead wall and under a railway bridge, we were blocked for four hours. We were obliged to walk home at last, having seen nothing whatever. The wretched van turned up in the course of the next morning; and the best of it was that at Rochester here they illuminated the fine old castle, and really made a very splendid and picturesque thing (so my neighbours tell me).

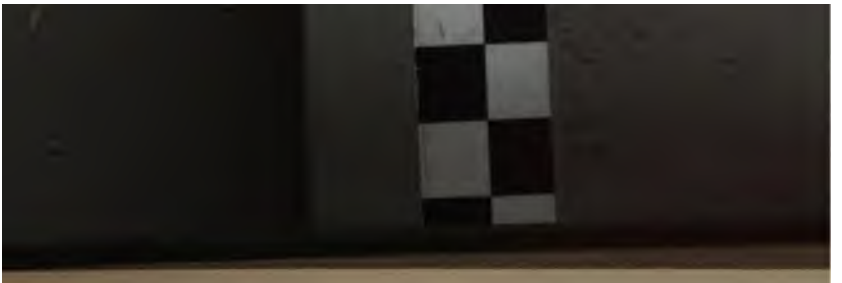
With love to Mrs. Macready and Katie,

Ever, my dearest Macready, your most affectionate.

CCCCLXXII. WILKIE COLLINS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, April 22, 1863.

Ah, poor Egg! I knew what you would think and feel



spot I shall try to buy something in loving remembrance of him, good dear little fellow. Think what a great "Frozen Deep" lay close under those boards we acted on! My brother Alfred, Luard, Arthur, Albert, Austin, Egg. Even among the audience, Prince Albert and poor Stone! "I heard the" — I forget what it was I used to say — "come up from the great deep;" and it rings in my ears now, like a sort of mad prophecy.

However, this won't do. We must close up the ranks and march on.

CCCCLXXIII. REV. W. BROOKFIELD[1]

GAD'S HILL, May 17, 1863.

MY DEAR BROOKFIELD, — It occurs to me that you may perhaps know, or know of, a kind of man that I want to discover.

One of my boys (the youngest) now is at Wimbledon School. He is a docile, amiable boy of fair abilities, but sensitive and shy. And he writes me so very earnestly that he feels the school to be confusingly large for him, and he is sure he could do better with some gentleman who gave his own personal attention to the education of half a dozen or a dozen boys, as to impress me with the belief that I ought to heed his conviction.

Has any such phenomenon as a good and reliable man in this wise ever come in your way? Forgive my troubling you, and believe me, Cordially yours.

CCCCLXXIV. THE SAME

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT, May 24, 1863.

MY DEAR BROOKFIELD, — I am most truly obliged to you for your kind and ready help.

When I am in town next week, I will call upon the Bishop of Natal, more to thank him than with the hope of profiting by that gentleman of whom he writes, as the limitation to "little boys" seems to stop the way. I want to find some one with whom this particular boy could remain; if there were a mutual interest and liking, that would be a great point gained.

Why did the kings in the fairy tales want children? I suppose in the weakness of the royal intellect.

[1] *Mr. Brookfield will be remembered as Thackeray's correspondent.*

Concerning "Nickleby," I am so much of your mind (comparing it with "Copperfield"), that it was a long time before I could take a pleasure in reading it. But I got better, as I found the audience always taking to it. I have been trying, alone by myself, the "Oliver Twist" murder, but have got something so horrible out of it that I am afraid to try it in public. Ever faithfully yours.

CCCCLXXV. M. DE CERJAT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Thursday, May 28, 1863.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — I don't wonder at your finding it difficult to reconcile your mind to a French Hamlet; but I assure you that Fechter's is a very remarkable performance perfectly consistent with itself (whether it be my particular Hamlet, or your particular Hamlet, or no), a coherent and intelligent whole, and done by a true artist. I have never seen, I think, an intelligent and clear view of the whole character so well sustained throughout; and there is a very captivating air of

have inverted the relations of the earth and the sun, whatever his impressions were. Again, it is contended that the science of geology is quite as much a revelation to man as books of an immense age and of (at the best) doubtful origin, and that your consideration of the latter must reasonably be influenced by the former. As I understand the importance of timely suggestions such as these, it is, that the Church should not gradually shock and lose the more thoughtful and logical of human minds; but should be so gently and considerately yielding as to retain them, and, through them, hundreds of thousands. This seems to me, as I understand the temper and tendency of the time, whether for good or evil, to be a very wise and necessary position. And as I understand the danger, it is not chargeable on those who take this ground, but on those who in reply call names and argue nothing. What these bishops and such-like say about revelation, in assuming it to be finished and done with, I can't in the least understand. Nothing is discovered without God's intention and assistance, and I suppose every new knowledge of His works that is conceded to man to be distinctly a revelation by which men are to guide themselves. Lastly, in the mere matter of religious doctrine and dogmas, these men (Protestants — protestors — successors of the men who protested against human judgment being set aside) talk and write as if they were all settled by the direct act of Heaven; not as if they had been, as we know they were, a matter of temporary accommodation and adjustment among disputing mortals as fallible as you or I.

Coming nearer home, I hope that Georgina is almost quite well. She has no attack of pain or flurry now, and is in all respects immensely better. Mary is neither married nor (that I know of) going to be. She and Katie and a lot of them have been playing croquet outside my window here for these last four days, to a mad and maddening extent. My sailor boy's ship, the Orlando, is fortunately in Chatham Dockyard — so he is pretty constantly at home — while the shipwrights are repairing a leak in her. I am reading in London every Friday just now. Great crams and great enthusiasm. Townshend I suppose to have left Lausanne somewhere about this day. His house in the park is *hermetically* sealed, ready for him. The *Prince and Princess of Wales* go about (wisely) very much, and *have as fair a chance of popularity* as ever prince and princess

had. The City ball in their honour is to be a tremendously gorgeous business, and Mary is highly excited by her father's being invited, and she with him. Meantime the unworthy parent is devising all kinds of subterfuges for sending her and getting out of it himself. A very intelligent German friend of mine, just home from America, maintains that the conscription will succeed in the North, and that the war will be indefinitely prolonged. *I* say "No," and that however mad and villainous the North is, the war will finish by reason of its not supplying soldiers. We shall see. The more they brag the more I don't believe in them.

CCCCLXXVI. A JEWISH LADY

Friday, July 10, 1863.

DEAR MADAM, — I hope you will excuse this tardy reply to your letter. It is often impossible for me, by any means, to keep pace with my correspondence. I must take leave to say, that if there be any general feeling on the part of the intelligent Jewish people, that I have done them what you describe as "a great wrong," they are a far less sensible, a far less just

ought to do) to their perfect good faith in such transactions as I have ever had with them; and in my "Child's History of England," I have lost no opportunity of setting forth their cruel persecution in old times.

Dear madam, faithfully yours.

CCCCLXXVII. MISS HOGARTH

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, October 7, 1863.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — You will see by to-day's "Times" that it *was* an earthquake that shook me, and that my watch showed exactly the same time as the man's who writes from Blackheath so near us — twenty minutes past three.

It is a great satisfaction to me to make it out so precisely; I wish you would inquire whether the servants felt it. I thought it was the voice of the cook that answered me, but that was nearly half an hour later. I am strongly inclined to think that there is a peculiar susceptibility in iron — at all events in our part of the country — to the shock, as though there were something magnetic in it. For, whereas my long iron bedstead was so violently shaken, I certainly heard nothing rattle in the room.

I will write about my return as soon as I get on with the still unbegun "Uncommercial." Ever affectionately.

CCCCLXXVIII. HENRY F. CHORLEY

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday, December 18, 1863.

MY DEAR CHORLEY, — This is a "Social Science" note, touching prospective engagements.

If you are obliged, as you were last year, to go away between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, then we rely upon your coming back to see the old year out. Furthermore, I rely upon you for this: Lady Molesworth says she will come down for a day or two, and I have told her that I shall ask you to be her escort, and to arrange a time. Will you take counsel with her, and arrange *accordingly*? After our family visitors are gone, *Mary is going a hunting in* Hampshire; but if you and Lady *Molesworth could make out* from Saturday, the 9th of January,

as your day of coming together, or for any day between that and Saturday, the 16th, it would be beforehand with her going and would suit me excellently. There is a new officer at the dockyard, *vice* Captain —— (now an admiral), and I will take that opportunity of paying him and his wife the attention of asking them to dine in these gorgeous halls. For all of which reasons, if the Social Science Congress of two could meet and arrive at a conclusion, the conclusion would be thankfully booked by the illustrious writer of these lines.

On Christmas Eve there is a train from your own Victoria Station at 4.35 P. M., which will bring you to Strood (Rochester Bridge Station) in an hour, and there a majestic form will be descried in a Basket.

Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXIX. W. H. WILLS

GAD'S HILL, Sunday, December 20, 1863.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I am clear that you took my cold. Why did n't you do the thing completely, and take it away from me? for it hangs by me still.

Will you tell Mrs. Linton that in looking over her admirable account (*most* admirable) of Mrs. Gordon's book, I have taken out the references to Lockhart, not because I in the least doubt their justice, but because I knew him and he liked me; and because one bright day in Rome, I walked about with him for some hours when he was dying fast, and all the old faults had faded out of him, and the now ghost of the handsome man I had first known when Scott's daughter was at the head of his house had little more to do with this world than she in her grave, or Scott in his, or small Hull Littlejohn in his. Lockhart had been anxious to see me all the previous day (when I was away on the Campagna), and as we walked about I knew very well that *he* knew very well why. He talked of getting better, but I never saw him again. This makes me stay Mrs. Linton's hand, gentle as it is.

Mrs. Lirriper is indeed a most brilliant old lady. God bless her.

I am glad to hear of your being "haunted," and hope to increase your stock of such ghosts pretty liberally.

Ever faithfully.

CCCCLXXX. WILKIE COLLINS

GAD'S HILL, Monday, January 24, 1864.

MY DEAR WILKIE, — I am horribly behindhand in answering your welcome letter; but I have been so busy, and have had the house so full for Christmas and the New Year, and have had so much to see to in getting Frank out to India, that I have not been able to settle down to a regular long letter, which I mean this to be, but which it may not turn out to be, after all.

First, I will answer your inquiries about the Christmas number and the new book. The Christmas number has been the greatest success of all; has shot ahead of last year; has sold about two hundred and twenty thousand; and has made the name of Mrs. Lirriper so swiftly and domestically famous as never was. I had a very strong belief in her when I wrote about her, finding that she made a great effect upon me; but she certainly has gone beyond my hopes. (Probably you know nothing about her? which is a very unpleasant consideration.) Of the new book, I have done the two first numbers, and am now beginning the third. It is a combination of drollery with romance which requires a great deal of pains and a perfect throwing away of points that might be amplified; but I hope it is *very good*. I confess, in short, that I think it is. Strange to say, I felt at first quite dazed in getting back to the large canvas and the big brushes; and even now, I have a sensation as of acting at the San Carlo after Tavistock House, which I could hardly have supposed would have come upon so old a stager.

You will have read about poor Thackeray's death — sudden, and yet not sudden, for he had long been alarmingly ill. At the solicitation of Mr. Smith and some of his friends, I have done what I would most gladly have excused myself from doing, if I felt I could — written a couple of pages about him in what was his own magazine.

Concerning the Italian experiment, De la Rue is more hopeful than you. He and his bank are closely leagued with the powers at Turin, and he has long been devoted to Cavour; but he gave me the strongest assurances (with illustrations) of the fusion between place and place, and of the blending of small mutually antagonistic characters into one national character,

progressing cheeringly and certainly. Of course there must be discouragements and discrepancies in the first struggles of a country previously so degraded and enslaved, and the time, as yet, has been very short.

I should like to have a day with you at the Coliseum, and on the Appian Way, and among the tombs, and with the Orvieto. But Rome and I are wide asunder, physically as well as morally. I wonder whether the dramatic stable, where we saw the marionettes, still receives the Roman public? And Lord! when I think of you in that hotel, how I think of poor dear Egg in the long front drawing-room, giving on to the piazza, posting up that wonderful necromantic volume which we never shall see opened!

CCCCLXXXI. MARCUS STONE

57, Gloucester Place, Hyde Park,
Tuesday, February 23, 1864.

My dear Marcus, — I think the design for the cover *excellent*, and do not doubt its coming out to perfection. The slight alteration I am going to suggest originates in a business consideration not to be overlooked.

The word "Our" in the title must be out in the open like "Mutual Friend," making the title three distinct large lines — "Our" as big as "Mutual Friend." This would give you too much design at the bottom. I would therefore take out the dustman, and put the Wegg and Boffin composition (which is capital) in its place. I don't want Mr. Inspector or the murder reward bill, because these points are sufficiently indicated in the river at the top. Therefore you can have an indication of the dustman in Mr. Inspector's place. Note, that the dustman's face should be droll, and not horrible. Twemlow's elbow will still go out of the frame as it does now, and the same with Lizzie's skirts on the opposite side. With these changes, work away!

Mrs. Boffin, as I judge of her from the sketch, "very good, indeed." I want Boffin's oddity, without being at all blinked, to be an oddity of a very honest kind, that people will like.

The dolls' dressmaker is immensely better than she was. I think she should now come extremely well. A weird sharpness not without beauty is the thing I want.

Affectionately always.

CCCCLXXXII. CHARLES KNIGHT

57, Gloucester Place, W., Tuesday, March 1, 1864.

My dear Knight, — We knew of your being in the Isle of Wight, and had said that we should have this year to drink your health in your absence. Rely on my being always ready and happy to renew our old friendship in the flesh. In the spirit it needs no renewal, because it has no break.

Ah, poor Mrs. White! A sad, sad story! It is better for poor White that that little churchyard by the sea received his ashes a while ago than that he should have lived to this time.

My poor boy [1] was on his way home from an up-country station, on sick leave. He had been very ill, but was not so at the time. He was talking to some brother-officers in the Calcutta hospital about his preparations for home, when he suddenly became excited, had a rush of blood from the mouth, and was dead. His brother Frank would arrive out at Calcutta, expecting to see him after six years, and he would have been dead a month.

My "working life" is resolving itself at the present into another book, in twenty green leaves. You work like a Trojan at Ventnor, but you do that everywhere; and that's why you are so young.

Mary and Georgina unite in kindest regard to you, and to Mrs. Knight, and to your daughters. So do I. And I am ever, my dear Knight,

Affectionately yours.

P. S. — Serene View! What a placid address!

CCCCLXXXIII. EDMUND OLLIER

"All the Year Round" Office, March, 1864.

I want the article on "Working Men's Clubs" to refer back to "The Poor Man and his Beer" in No. 1, and to maintain the principle involved in that effort.

Also, emphatically, to show that trustfulness is at the bottom of all social institutions, and that to trust a man, as one of a body of men, is to place him under a wholesome restraint of

[1] Dickens's second son, Walter Landor.

social opinion, and is a very much better thing than to make a baby of him.

Also, to point out that the rejection of beer in this club, tobacco in that club, dancing or what-not in another club, are instances that such clubs are founded on mere whims, and therefore cannot successfully address human nature in the general and hope to last.

Also, again to urge that patronage is the curse and blight of all such endeavours, and to impress upon the working men that they must originate and manage for themselves. And to ask them the question, can they possibly show their detestation of drunkenness better, or better strive to get rid of it from among them, than to make it a hopeless disqualification in all their clubs, and a reason for expulsion.

Also, to encourage them to declare to themselves and their fellow working men that they want social rest and social recreation for themselves and their families; and that these clubs are intended for that laudable and necessary purpose, and do not need educational pretences or flourishes. Do not let them be afraid or ashamed of wanting to be amused and pleased.

CCCCLXXXIV. THE LORD CHIEF BARON

57, Gloucester Place, Tuesday, March 15, 1864.

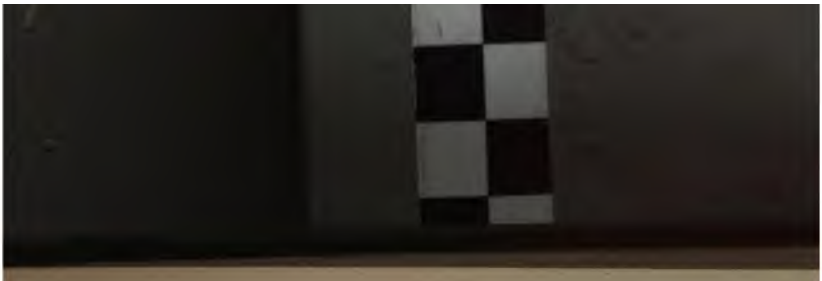
My dear Chief Baron, — Many thanks for your kind letter, which I find on my return from a week's holiday.

Your answer concerning poor Thackeray I will duly make known to the active spirit in that matter, Mr. Shirley Brooks.

Your kind invitation to me to come and see you and yours, and hear the nightingales, I shall not fail to discuss with Forster, and with an eye to spring. I expect to see him presently; the rather as I found a note from him when I came back yesterday, describing himself somewhat gloomily as not having been well, and as feeling a little out of heart.

It is not out of order, I hope, to remark that you have been much in my thoughts and on my lips lately? For I really have not been able to repress my admiration of the vigorous dignity and sense and spirit, with which one of the best of judges set right one of the dullest of juries in a recent case.

Believe me ever, very faithfully yours.



CCCCLXXXV. JOHN FORSTER

57, Gloucester Place, Tuesday, March 29, 1864.

My dear Forster, — I meant to write to you last night, but to enable Wills to get away I had to read a book of Fitzgerald's through before I went to bed.

Concerning Eliot, I sat down, as I told you, and read the book through with the strangest interest and the highest admiration. I believe it to be as honest, spirited, patient, reliable, and gallant a piece of biography as ever was written, the care and pains of it astonishing, the completeness of it masterly; and what I particularly feel about it is that the dignity of the man and the dignity of the book that tells about the man always go together, and fit each other. This same quality has always impressed me as the great leading specialty of the Goldsmith, and enjoins sympathy with the subject, knowledge of it, and pursuit of it in its own spirit; but I think it even more remarkable here. I declare that apart from the interest of having been so put into the time, and enabled to understand it, I personally feel quite as much the credit and honour done to literature by such a book. It quite clears out of the remembrance a thousand pitiful things, and sets one up in heart again. I am not surprised in the least by Bulwer's enthusiasm. I was as confident about the effect of the book when I closed the first volume as I was when I closed the second with a full heart. No man less in earnest than Eliot himself could have done it, and I make bold to add that it never could have been done by a man who was so distinctly born to do the work as Eliot was to do his.

Saturday at Hastings I must give up. I have wavered and considered, and considered and wavered, but if I take that sort of holiday, I must have a day to spare after it, and at this critical time I have not. If I were to lose a page of the five numbers I have purposed to myself to be ready by the publication day, I should feel that I had fallen short. I have grown hard to satisfy, and write very slowly, and I have so much bad fiction, that *will* be thought of when I don't want to think of it, that I am *forced to take* more care than I ever took.

Ever affectionately.

CCCCLXXXVI. MRS. STORRAR

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday Morning, May 15, 1864.

MY DEAR MRS. STORRAR, — Our family dinner must come off at Gad's Hill, where I have improvements to exhibit, and where I shall be truly pleased to see you and the doctor again. I have deferred answering your note, while I have been scheming and scheming for a day between this time and our departure. But it is all in vain. My engagements have accumulated, and become such a whirl, that no day is left me. Nothing is left me but to get away. I look forward to my release from this dining life with an inexpressible longing after quiet and my own pursuits. What with public speechifying, private eating and drinking, and perpetual simmering in hot rooms, I have made London too hot to hold me and my work together. Mary and Georgina acknowledge the condition of imbecility to which we have become reduced in reference to your kind reminder. They say, when I stare at them in a forlorn way with your note in my hand: "What CAN you do!" To which I can only reply, implicating them: "See what you have brought me to!"

With our united kind regard to yourself and Dr. Storrar, I entreat your pity and compassion for an unfortunate wretch whom a too-confiding disposition has brought to this pass. If I had not allowed my "cheeild" to pledge me to all manner of fellow-creatures, I and my digestion might have been in a state of honourable independence this day.

Faithfully and penitently yours.

CCCCLXXXVII. PERCY FITZGERALD

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Wednesday, July 27, 1864.

MY DEAR MR. FITZGERALD, — First, let me assure you that it gave us all real pleasure to see your sister and you at Gad's Hill, and that we all hope you will both come and stay a day or two with us when you are next in England.

Next, let me convey to you the intelligence that I resolve to launch "Miss Manuel," fully confiding in your conviction of

the power of the story. On all business points, Wills will communicate with you. I purpose beginning its publication in our first September number, therefore there is no time to be lost.

The only suggestion I have to make as to the MS. in hand and type is, that Captain Fermor wants relief. It is a disagreeable character, as you mean it to be, and I should be afraid to do so much with him, if the case were mine, without taking the taste of him, here and there, out of the reader's mouth. It is remarkable that if you do not administer a disagreeable character carefully, the public have a decided tendency to think that the *story* is disagreeable, and not merely the fictitious person.

What do you think of the title,

NEVER FORGOTTEN?

It is a good one in itself, would express the eldest sister's pursuit, and, glanced at now and then in the text, would hold the reader in suspense. I would propose to add the line,

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA."

Let me know your opinion as to the title. I need not assure you that the greatest care will be taken of you here, and that we shall make you as thoroughly well and widely known as we possibly can.

Very faithfully yours.

CCCCLXXXVIII. SIR JAMES EMERSON TENNENT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday, August 26, 1864.

MY DEAR TENNENT, — Believe me, I fully intended to come to you — did not doubt that I should come — and have greatly disappointed Mary and her aunt, as well as myself, by not coming. But I do not feel safe in going out for a visit. The mere knowledge that I had such a thing before me would put me out. It is not the length of time consumed, or the distance traversed, but it is the departure from a settled habit and a continuous sacrifice of pleasures that comes in question. This is an old story with me. I have never divided a book of my writing with anything else, but have always wrought at it to the exclusion of everything else; and it is now too late to change.

After receiving your kind note I resolved to make another trial. But the hot weather and a few other drawbacks did not mend the matter, for I have dropped astern this month instead of going ahead. So I have seen Forster, and shown him my chains, and am reduced to taking exercise in them, like Baron Trenck.

I am heartily pleased that you set so much store by the dedication. You may be sure that it does not make me the less anxious to take pains, and to work out well what I have in my mind.

Mary and Georgina unite with me in kindest regards to Lady Tennent and Miss Tennent, and wish me to report that while they are seriously disappointed, they still feel there is no help for it. I can testify that they had great pleasure in the anticipation of the visit, and that their faces were very long and blank indeed when I began to hint my doubts. They fought against them valiantly as long as there was a chance, but they see my difficulty as well as any one not myself can.

Believe me, my dear Tennent, ever faithfully yours.

with no wings, no flies, no looking off in any direction. If you tell me that you are to be in town by that time, I will not fail to refresh your memory as to the precise day.

With kind regards to Mrs. Stanfield, believe me, my dear old boy,

Ever your affectionate DICK.

CCCCXC. W. H. WILLS

LORD WARDEN HOTEL, DOVER,
Sunday, 16th October, 1864.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I was unspeakably relieved, and most agreeably surprised, to get your letter this morning. I had pictured you as lying there waiting full another week, whereas, please God, you will now come up with a wet sheet and a flowing sail — as we say in these parts.

My expectations of "Mrs. Lirriper's" sale are not so mighty as yours, but I am heartily glad and grateful to be honestly able to believe that she is nothing but a good 'un. It is the condensation of a quantity of subjects and the very greatest pains.

George Russell knew nothing whatever of the slightest doubt of your being elected at the Garrick. Rely on my probing the matter to the bottom and ascertaining everything about it, and giving you the fullest information in ample time to decide what shall be done. Don't bother yourself about it. I have spoken. On my eyes be it.

As next week will not be my working-time at "Our Mutual Friend," I shall devote the day of Friday (*not* the evening) to making up news. Therefore I write to say that if you would rather stay where you are than come to London, *don't come*. I shall throw my hat into the ring at eleven, and shall receive all the punishment that can be administered by two Nos. on end like a British Glutton.

Ever.

CCCCXCI. M. DE CERJAT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,
Tuesday, October 25, 1864.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — Here is a limping brute of a reply to your always-welcome Christmas letter! But, as usual, when I

have done my day's work, I jump up from my desk and rush into air and exercise, and find letter-writing the most difficult thing in my daily life.

I hope that your asthmatic tendencies may not be strong just now; but Townshend's account of the premature winter at Lausanne is not encouraging, and with us here in England all such disorders have been aggravated this autumn. However, a man of your dignity *must* have either asthma or gout, and I hope you have got the better of the two.

In London there is, as you see by the papers, extraordinarily little news. At present the apprehension (rather less than it was thought) of a commercial crisis, and the trial of Müller next Thursday, are the two chief sensations. I hope that gentleman will be hanged, and have hardly a doubt of it, though croakers contrariwise are not wanting. It is difficult to conceive any other line of defence than that the circumstances proved, taken separately, are slight. But a sound judge will immediately charge the jury that the strength of the circumstances lies in their being put together, and will thread them together on a fatal rope.

less arbitrary pretensions and a stronger hold upon the mantle of our Saviour, as He walked and talked upon this earth.

Of family intelligence I have very little. Charles Collins continuing in a very poor way, and showing no signs of amendment. He and my daughter Katie went to Wiesbaden and thence to Nice, where they are now. I have strong apprehensions that he will never recover, and that she will be left a young widow. All the rest are as they were. Mary neither married nor going to be; Georgina holding them all together and perpetually corresponding with the distant ones; occasional rallyings coming off here, in which another generation begins to peep above the table. I once used to think what a horrible thing it was to be a grandfather. Finding that the calamity falls upon me without my perceiving any other change in myself, I bear it like a man.

Mrs. Watson has bought a house in town, to which she repairs in the season, for the bringing out of her daughter. She is now at Rockingham. Her eldest son is said to be as good an eldest son as ever was, and to make her position there a perfectly independent and happy one. I have not seen him for some years; her I often see; but he ought to be a good fellow, and is very popular in his neighbourhood.

I have altered this place very much since you were here, and have made a pretty (I think an unusually pretty) drawing-room. I wish you would come back and see it. My being on the Dover line, and my being very fond of France, occasion me to cross the Channel perpetually. Whenever I feel that I have worked too much, or am on the eve of overdoing it, and want a change, away I go by the mail-train, and turn up in Paris or anywhere else that suits my humour, next morning. So I come back as fresh as a daisy, and preserve as ruddy a face as though I never leant over a sheet of paper. When I retire from a literary life I think of setting up as a Channel pilot.

Pray give my love to Mrs. Cerjat, and tell her that I should like to go up the Great St. Bernard again, and shall be glad to know if she is open to another ascent. Old days in Switzerland are ever fresh to me, and sometimes I walk with you again, after dark, outside the hotel at Martigny, while Lady Mary Taylour (was n't it?) sang within very prettily. Lord, how the time goes! How many years ago!

Affectionately yours.

CCCCXCII. W. H. WILLS

GAD'S HILL, Wednesday, 30th November, 1864.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I found the beautiful and perfect brougham awaiting me in triumph at the station when I came down yesterday afternoon. Georgina and Marsh were both highly mortified that it had fallen dark, and the beauties of the carriage were obscured. But of course I had it out in the yard the first thing this morning, and got in and out at both the doors, and let down and pulled up the windows, and checked an imaginary coachman, and leaned back in a state of placid contemplation.

It is the lightest and prettiest and best carriage of the class ever made. But you know that I value it for higher reasons than these. It will always be dear to me — far dearer than anything on wheels could ever be for its own sake — as a proof of your ever generous friendship and appreciation, and a memorial of a happy intercourse and a perfect confidence that have never had a break, and that surely never can have any break now (after all these years) but one. Ever your faithful.

CCCCXCIII. B. W. PROCTER

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Saturday, December 31, 1864.

MY DEAR PROCTER, — I have reserved my acknowledgment of your delightful note (the youngest note I have had in all this year) until to-day, in order that I might send, most heartily and affectionately, all seasonable good wishes to you and to Mrs. Procter, and to those who are nearest and dearest to you. Take them from an old friend who loves you.

Mamie returns the tender compliments, and Georgina does what the Americans call "indorse them." "Mrs. Lirriper" is proud to be so remembered, and says over and over again "that it's worth twenty times the trouble she has taken with the narrative, since Barry Cornwall, Esquire, is pleased to like it."

I got rid of a touch of neuralgia in France (as I always do there), but I found no old friends in my voyages of discovery on that side, such as I have left on this.

My dear Procter, ever your affectionate.

CCCCXCIV. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, January 17, 1865.

MY DEAR KENT, — I meant to have written instantly on the appearance of your paper in its beautiful freshness, to congratulate you on its handsome appearance, and to send you my heartiest good wishes for its thriving and prosperous career. Through a mistake of the postman's, that remarkable letter has been tessellated into the Infernal Pavement instead of being delivered in the Strand.

We have been looking and waiting for your being well enough to propose yourself for a mouthful of fresh air. Are you well enough to come on Sunday? We shall be coming down from Charing Cross on Sunday morning, and I shall be going up again at nine on Monday morning.

It amuses me to find that you don't see your way with a certain "Mutual Friend" of ours. I have a horrible suspicion that you may begin to be fearfully knowing at somewhere about No. 12 or 13. But you shan't if I can help it.

Your note delighted me because it dwelt upon the places in the number that *I* dwell on. Not that that is anything new in your case, but it is always new to me in the pleasure I derive from it, which is truly inexpressible. Ever cordially yours.

CCCCXCV. MRS. PROCTER

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, February 15, 1865.

MY DEAR MRS. PROCTER, — Of course I will do it, and of course I will do it for the love of you and Procter. You can give me my brief, and we can speak about its details. Once again, of course I will do it, and with all my heart.

I have registered a vow (in which there is not the least merit, for I could n't help it) that when I am, as I am now, very hard at work upon a book, I never will dine out more than one day in a week. Why did n't you ask me for the Wednesday before I stood engaged to Lady Molesworth for the Tuesday?

It is so delightful to me to sit by your side anywhere and be

brightened up, that I lay a handsome sacrifice upon the altar of "Our Mutual Friend" in writing this note very much against my will. But for as many years as can be made consistent with my present juvenility, I always have given my work the first place in my life, and what can I do now at 35! — or at least at the two figures, never mind their order.

I send my love to Procter, hoping you may appropriate a little of it by the way. Affectionately yours.

CCCCXCVI. W. C. MACREADY

Office of "All the Year Round,"
Wednesday, March 1, 1865.

My dearest Macready, — I have been laid up here with a frost-bitten foot (from hard walking in the snow), or you would have heard from me sooner.

My reply to Professor Agassiz is short, but conclusive. Daily seeing improper uses made of confidential letters in the addressing of them to a public audience that have no business with them, I made not long ago a great fire in my field at Gad's Hill,

ing — a very slight penalty, as I detest going out to dinner (which killed the original old Parr by the bye).

I am working like a dragon at my book, and am a terror to the household, likewise to all the organs and brass bands in this quarter. Gad's Hill is being gorgeously painted, and we are here until the 1st of June. I wish I might hope you would be there any time this summer; I really *have* made the place comfortable and pretty by this time.

It is delightful to us to hear such good news of Butty. She made so deep an impression on Fechter that he always asks me what Ceylon has done for her, and always beams when I tell him how thoroughly well it has made her. As to *you*, you are the youngest man (worth mentioning as a thorough man) that I know. Oh, let me be as young when I am as — did you think I was going to write "old"? No, sir — withdraw from the wear and tear of busy life is my expression.

Poole still holds out at Kentish Town, and says he is dying of solitude. His memory is astoundingly good. I see him about once in two or three months, and in the mean time he makes notes of questions to ask me when I come. Having fallen in arrear of the time, these generally refer to unknown words he has encountered in the newspapers. His three last (he always reads them with tremendous difficulty through an enormous magnifying-glass) were as follows: —

1. What 's croquet?
2. What 's an Albert chain?
3. Let me know the state of mind of the Queen.

When I had delivered a neat exposition on these heads, he turned back to his memoranda, and came to something that the utmost power of the enormous magnifying-glass could n't render legible. After a quarter of an hour or so, he said, "Oh, yes, I know," and then rose and clasped his hands above his head, and said, "Thank God! I am not a dram-drinker."

Do think of coming to Gad's in the summer; and do give my love to Mrs. Macready, and tell her I know she can make you come if she will. Mary and Georgy send best and dearest loves to her, to you, and to Katie, and to baby. Johnny we suppose to be climbing the tree of knowledge elsewhere.

My dearest Macready, ever yours most affectionately.

CCCCXCVIII. W. C. MACREADY

GAD'S HILL, Monday, June 12, 1865.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, —

[*So far in his own writing.*]

Many thanks for your kind words of remembrance.[1] This is not all in my own hand, because I am too much shaken to write many notes. Not by the beating and dragging of the carriage in which I was, — it did not go over, but was caught on the turn, among the ruins of the bridge, — but by the work afterwards to get out the dying and dead, which was terrible.

[*The rest in his own writing.*]

Ever your affectionate friend.

P. S. — My love to Mrs. Macready.

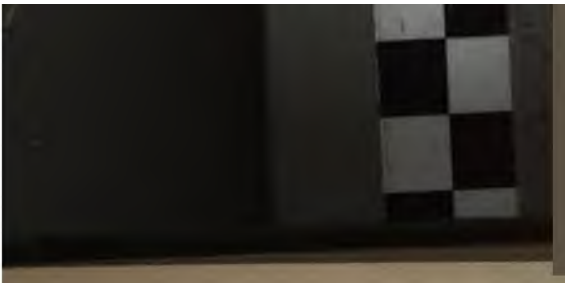
CCCCXCIX. THOMAS MITTON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, June 13, 1865.

MY DEAR MITTON, — I should have written to you yesterday or the day before, if I had been quite up to writing.

I was in the only carriage that did not go over into the stream. It was caught upon the turn by some of the ruin of the bridge, and hung suspended and balanced in an apparently impossible manner. Two ladies were my fellow-passengers, an old one and a young one. This is exactly what passed. You may judge from it the precise length of the suspense: Suddenly we were off the rail, and beating the ground as the car of a half-emptied balloon might. The old lady cried out, "My God!" and the young one screamed. I caught hold of them both (the old lady sat opposite and the young one on my left), and said, "We can't help ourselves, but we can be quiet and composed. Pray don't cry out." The old lady immediately answered, "Thank you. Rely upon me. Upon my soul I will be quiet." We were then all tilted down together in a corner of the carriage, and stopped. I said to them thereupon, "You may be sure nothing worse can happen. Our danger *must* be over. Will you remain here without stirring, while I get out

[1] This was a circular note which he sent in answer to innumerable letters of inquiry, after the accident.



of the window?" They both answered quite collectedly, "Yes," and I got out without the least notion what had happened. Fortunately I got out with great caution and stood upon the step. Looking down I saw the bridge gone, and nothing below me but the line of rail. Some people in the two other compartments were madly trying to plunge out at window, and had no idea that there was an open swampy field fifteen feet down below them, and nothing else! The two guards (one with his face cut) were running up and down on the down side of the bridge (which was not torn up) quite wildly. I called out to them: "Look at me. Do stop an instant and look at me, and tell me whether you don't know me." One of them answered, "We know you very well, Mr. Dickens." "Then," I said, "my good fellow, for God's sake give me your key, and send one of those labourers here, and I'll empty this carriage." We did it quite safely, by means of a plank or two, and when it was done I saw all the rest of the train, except the two baggage vans, down in the stream. I got into the carriage again for my brandy flask, took off my travelling-hat for a basin, climbed down the brickwork, and filled my hat with water.

Suddenly I came upon a staggering man covered with blood (I think he must have been flung clean out of his carriage), with such a frightful cut across the skull that I could n't bear to look at him. I poured some water over his face and gave him some to drink, then gave him some brandy, and laid him down on the grass, and he said, "I am gone," and died afterwards. Then I stumbled over a lady lying on her back against a little pollard-tree, with the blood streaming over her face (which was lead colour) in a number of distinct little streams from the head. I asked her if she could swallow a little brandy and she just nodded, and I gave her some and left her for somebody else. The next time I passed her she was dead. Then a man, examined at the inquest yesterday (who evidently had not the least remembrance of what really passed), came running up to me and implored me to help him find his wife, who was afterwards found dead. No imagination can conceive the ruin of the carriages, or the extraordinary weights under which the *people were lying*, or the complications into which *they were twisted up among* iron and wood, and mud and water. *I don't want to be* examined at the inquest, and I don't

want to write about it. I could do no good either way, and I could only seem to speak about myself, which, of course, I would rather not do. I am keeping very quiet here. I have a — I don't know what to call it — constitutional (I suppose) presence of mind, and was not in the least fluttered at the time. I instantly remembered that I had the MS. of a number with me, and clambered back into the carriage for it. But in writing these scanty words of recollection I feel the shake and am obliged to stop. Ever faithfully.

D. MRS. HULKES

GAD'S HILL, Sunday, June 18, 1865.

MY DEAR MRS. HULKES, — I return the "Examiner" with many thanks. The account is true, except that I *had* brandy. By an extraordinary chance I had a bottle and a half with me. I slung the half-bottle round my neck, and carried my hat full of water in my hands. But I can understand the describer (whoever he is) making the mistake in perfect good faith, and supposing that I called for brandy, when I really called to the others who were helping: "I have brandy here." The Mr. Dickenson mentioned had changed places with a Frenchman, who did not like the window down, a few minutes before the accident. The Frenchman was killed, and a labourer and I got Mr. Dickenson out of a most extraordinary heap of dark ruins, in which he was jammed upside down. He was bleeding at the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth; but he did n't seem to know that afterwards, and of course I did n't tell him. In the moment of going over the viaduct the whole of his pockets were shaken empty! He had no watch, no chain, no money, no pocket-book, no handkerchief, when we got him out. He had been choking a quarter of an hour when I heard him groaning. If I had not had the brandy to give him at the moment, I think he would have been done for. As it was, I brought him up to London in the carriage with me, and could n't make him believe he was hurt. He was the first person whom the brandy saved. As I ran back to the carriage for the whole full bottle, I saw the first two people I had helped lying dead. A bit of shade from the hot sun, into which we got the unhurt ladies, soon had as many dead in it as living. Faithfully yours always.

DI. MR. PERCY FITZGERALD

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Friday, July 7, 1865.

MY DEAR FITZGERALD, — I shall be delighted to see you at Gad's Hill on Sunday, and I hope you will bring a bag with you and will not think of returning to London at night.

We are a small party just now, for my daughter Mary has been decoyed to Andover for the election week, in the Conservative interest; think of my feelings as a Radical parent! The wrong-headed member and his wife are the friends with whom she hunts, and she helps to receive (and *de*ceive) the voters, which is very awful!

But in the week after next we shall be in great croquet force. I shall hope to persuade you to come back to us then for a few days, and we will try to make you some amends for a dull Sunday. Turn it over in your mind and try to manage it.

Sincerely yours ever.

DII. PROFESSOR OWEN, F. R. S.

GAD'S HILL, Wednesday, July 12, 1865.

MY DEAR OWEN, — Studying the gorilla last night for the twentieth time, it suddenly came into my head that I had never thanked you for that admirable treatise. This is to bear witness to my blushes and repentance. If you knew how much interest it has awakened in me, and how often it has set me a thinking, you would consider me a more thankless beast than any gorilla that ever lived. But happily you do *not* know, and I am not going to tell you.

Believe me, ever faithfully yours.

DIII. SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Thursday, July 20, 1865.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON, — I am truly sorry to reply to your kind and welcome note that we cannot come to Knebworth on a visit at this time: firstly, because I am tied by the leg to my book. Secondly, because my married daughter and her hus-

band are with us. Thirdly, because my two boys are at home for their holidays.

But if you would come out of that murky electioneering atmosphere and come to us, you don't know how delighted we should be. You should have your own way as completely as though you were at home. You should have a cheery room, and you should have a Swiss châlet all to yourself to write in. *Smoking regarded as a personal favour to the family.* Georgina is so insupportably vain on account of being a favourite of yours, that you might find *her* a drawback; but nothing else would turn out in that way, I hope.

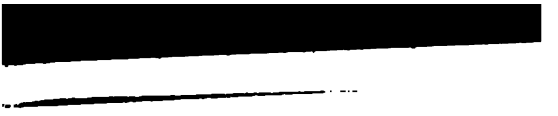
Won't you manage it? *Do* think of it. If, for instance, you would come back with us on that Guild Saturday. I have turned the house upside down and inside out since you were here, and have carved new rooms out of places then non-existent. Pray do think of it, and do manage it. I should be heartily pleased.

I hope you will find the purpose and the plot of my book very plain when you see it as a whole piece. I am looking forward to sending you the proofs complete about the end of next month. It is all sketched out and I am working hard on it, giving it all the pains possible to be bestowed on a labour of love. Your critical opinion two months in advance of the public will be invaluable to me. For you know what store I set by it, and how I think over a hint from you.

I notice the latest piece of poisoning ingenuity in Pritchard's case. When he had made his medical student boarders sick, by poisoning the family food, he then quietly walked out, took an emetic, and made himself sick. This with a view to ask them, in examination on a possible trial, whether he did not present symptoms at the time like the rest, — a question naturally asked for him and answered in the affirmative. From which I get at the fact.

If your constituency don't bring you in they deserve to lose you, and may the gods continue to confound them! I shudder at the thought of such public life as political life. Would there not seem to be something horribly rotten in the system of it, when one stands amazed how any man — not forced into it by position, as you are — can bear to live it?

But the private life here is my point, and again I urge upon you. Do think of it, and Do come.



band are with us. Thirdly, because my two boys are at home for their holidays.

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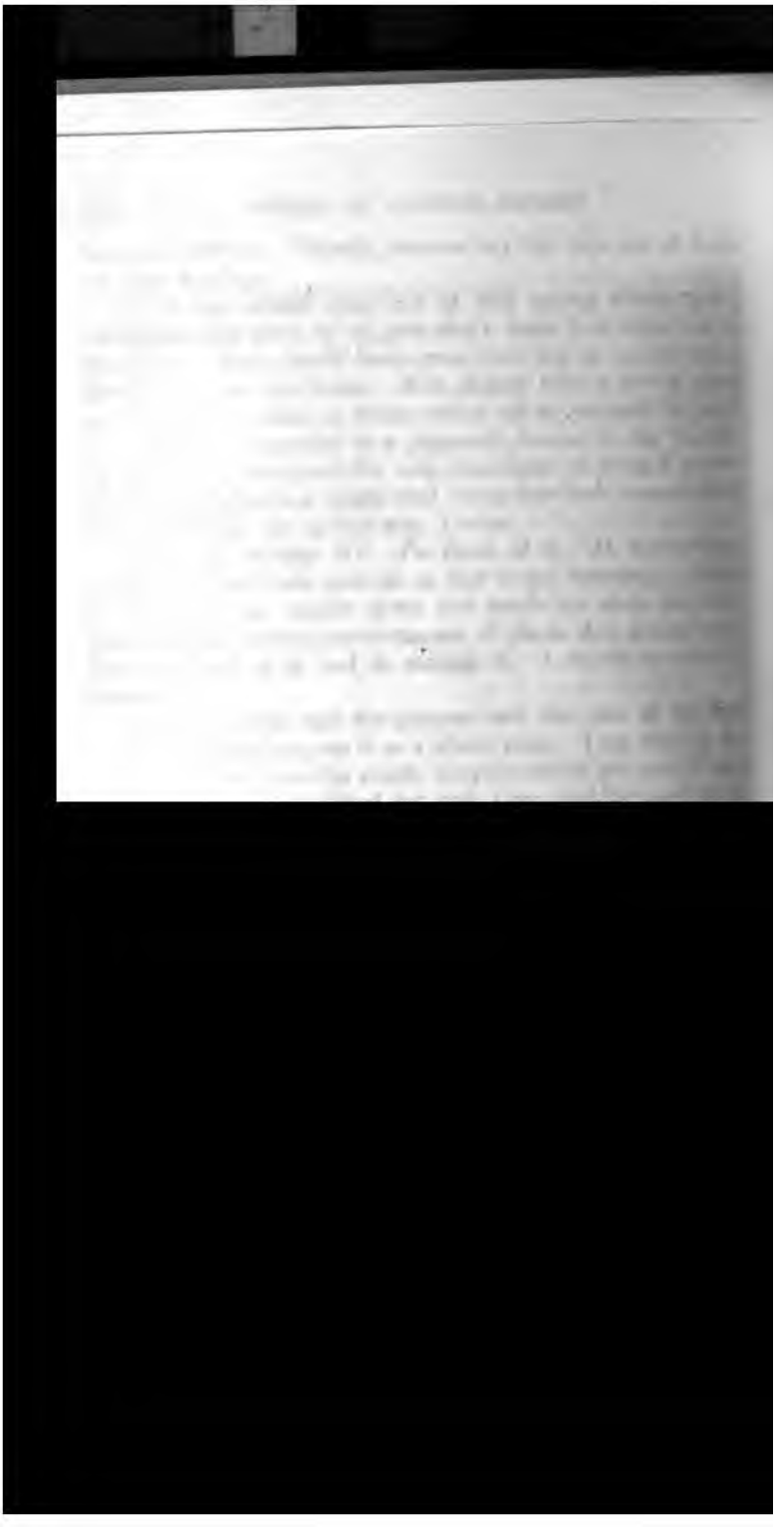
Charles Dickens reading to his Daughter (about 1865)



I want to tell you how I have been impressed by the "Boatman." It haunts me as only a beautiful and profound thing can. The lines are always running in my head, as the river runs with me.

Ever affectionately.

DIV. EARL RUSSELL

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, August 16, 1865.

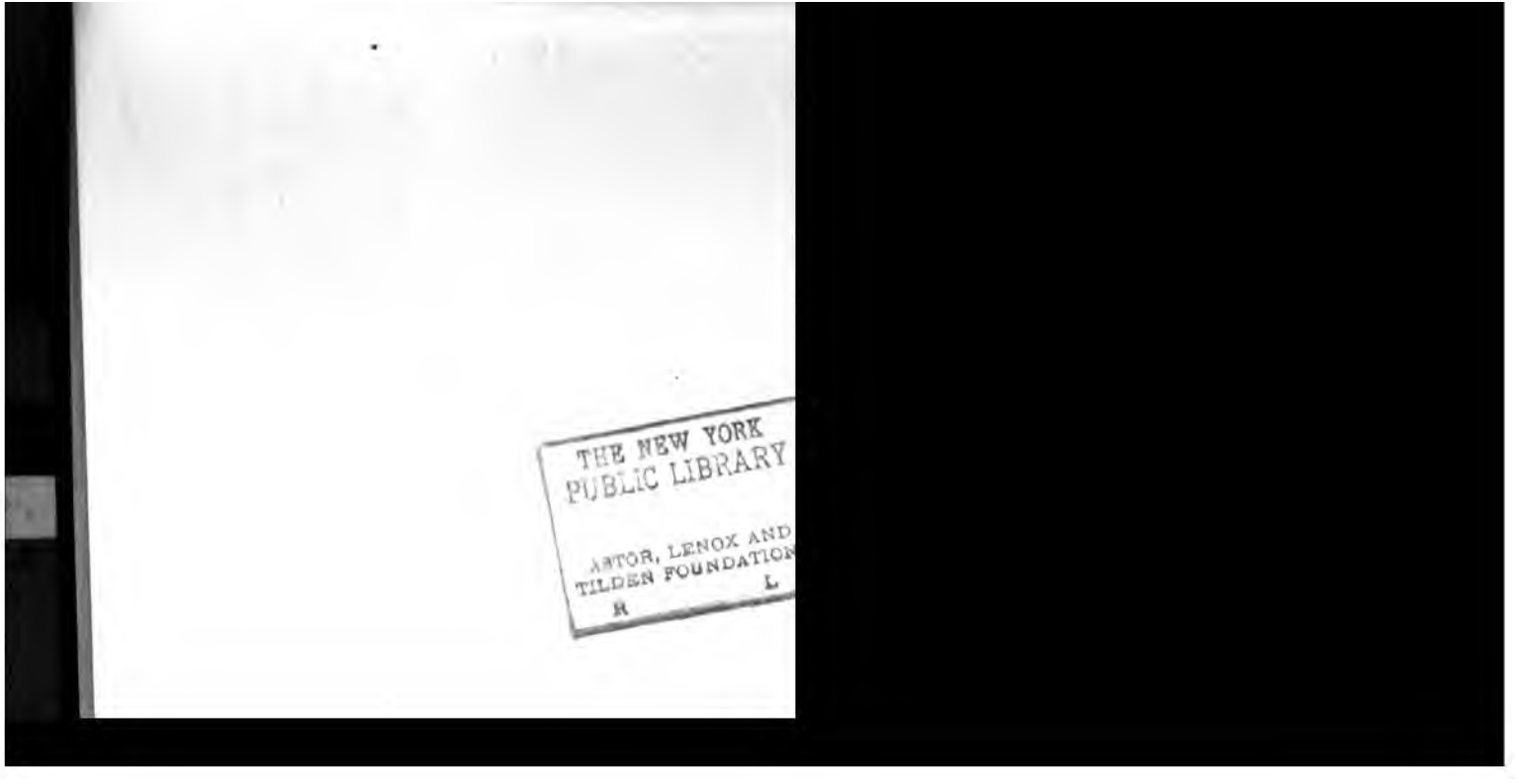
MY DEAR LORD RUSSELL, — Mr. Dallas, who is a candidate for the Scotch professional chair left vacant by Aytoun's death, has asked me if I would object to introduce to you the first volume of a book he has in the press with my publishers, on "The Gay Science of Art and Criticism." I have replied I would *not* object, as I have read as many of the sheets as I could get, with extreme pleasure, and as I know you will find it a very winning and brilliant piece of writing. Therefore he will send the proofs of the volume to you as soon as he can get them from the printer (at about the end of this week I take it), and if you read them you will not be hard upon me for bearing the responsibility of his doing so, I feel assured.

I suppose Mr. Dallas to have some impression that his pleasing you with his book might advance his Scottish suit. But all I know is, that he is a gentleman of great attainments and erudition, much distinguished as the writer of the best critical literary pieces in "The Times," and thoroughly versed in the subjects which Professor Aytoun represented officially.

I beg to send my regard to Lady Russell and all the house, and am ever, my dear Lord Russell,

Your faithful and obliged.

P. S. — I am happy to report that my sailor-boy's captain, relinquishing his ship on sick-leave, departs from the mere form of certificate given to all the rest, and adds that his obedience to orders is remarkable, and that he is a highly intelligent and promising young officer.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Your hint that you were getting on with your story and liked it was more than golden intelligence to me in foreign parts. The intensity of the heat, both in Paris and the provinces, was such that I found nothing else so refreshing in the course of my rambles.

With many more thanks for the dog than my sheet of paper would hold,

Believe me, ever very faithfully yours.

DVII. MRS. PROCTER

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
September 26, 1865.

MY DEAR MRS. PROCTER, — I have written the little introduction, and have sent it to my printer, in order that you may read it without trouble. But if you would like to keep the few pages of MS., of course they are yours.

It is brief, and I have aimed at perfect simplicity, and an avoidance of all that your beloved Adelaide would have wished avoided. Do not expect too much from it. If there should be anything wrong in fact, or anything that you would like changed for any reason, *of course you will tell me so*, and of course you will not deem it possible that you can trouble me by making any such request most freely.

You will probably receive the proof either on Friday or Saturday. Don't write to me until you have read it. In the mean time I send you back the two books, with the two letters in the bound one.

With love to Procter,

Ever your affectionate friend.

DVIII. EDMUND YATES

HÔTEL DU HELDER, PARIS,
Wednesday, September 30, 1865.

MY DEAR EDMUND, — I leave here to-morrow and purpose being at the office on Saturday night; all next week I shall be there, off and on — "off" meaning Gad's Hill; the office will be my last address. The heat has been excessive on this side of the Channel, and I got a slight sunstroke last Thursday, and was obliged to be doctored and put to bed for a day; but, thank

God, I am all right again. The man who sells the *tisane* on the Boulevards can't keep the flies out of his glasses, and as he wears them on his red velvet bands, the flies work themselves into the ends of the tumblers, trying to get through and tickle the man. If fly-life were long enough, I think they would at last. Three paving-blouses came to work at the corner of this street last Monday, pulled up a bit of road, sat down to look at it, and fell asleep. On Tuesday one of the blouses spat on his hands and seemed to be going to begin, but did n't: the other two have shown no sign of life whatever. This morning the industrious one ate a loaf. You may rely upon this as the latest news from the French capital.

Faithfully ever.

DIX. HENRY F. CHORLEY

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
No. 26, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, W. C.,
Saturday, 28th of October, 1865.

MY DEAR CHORLEY, — I find your letter here only to-day. I shall be delighted to dine with you on Tuesday, the 7th, but

Inclosed is the MS. of the introduction. The printers have cut it across and mended it again, because I always expect them to be quick, and so they distribute my "copy" among several hands, and apparently not very clean ones in this instance.

Odd as the poor butcher's feeling appears, I think I can understand it. Much as he would not have liked his boy's grave to be without a tombstone, had he died ashore and had a grave, so he can't bear him to drift to the depths of the ocean unrecorded.

My love to Procter.

Ever affectionately yours.

DXI. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

26, Wellington Street, Monday, November 6, 1865.

My dear Kent, — *No*, I *won't* write in this book, because I have sent another to the binder's for you.

I have been unwell with a relaxed throat, or I should have written to you sooner to thank you for your dedication, to assure you that it heartily, most heartily, gratifies me, as the sincere tribute of a true and generous heart, and to tell you that I have been charmed with your book itself. I am proud of having given a name to anything so picturesque, so sympathetic and spirited.

I hope and believe the "Doctor" is nothing but a good 'un. He has perfectly astonished Forster, who writes: "Neither good, gooder, nor goodest, but super-excellent; all through there is such a relish of you at your best, as I could not have believed in, after a long story."

I shall be charmed to see you to-night.

Ever affectionately.

DXII. M. DE CERJAT

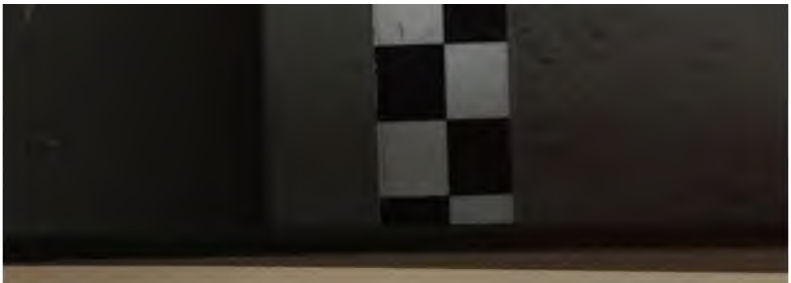
Gad's Hill Place, Higham by Rochester, Kent, November 13, 1865.

My dear Cerjat, — Having achieved my book and my Christmas number, and having shaken myself after two years' work, I send you my annual greeting. How are you? Asthmatic, *I know you will reply*; but as my poor father (who was *asthmatic, too, and the jolliest* of men) used philosophically to

say, "one must have something wrong, I suppose, and I like to know what it is."

In England we are groaning under the brigandage of the butcher, which is being carried to that height that I think I foresee resistance on the part of the middle class, and some combination in perspective for abolishing the middle man, whensoever he turns up (which is everywhere) between producer and consumer. The cattle plague is the butcher's stalking-horse, and it is unquestionably worse than it was; but seeing that the great majority of creatures lost or destroyed have been cows, and likewise that the rise in butchers' meat bears no reasonable proportion to the market prices of the beasts, one comes to the conclusion that the public is done. The commission has ended very weakly and ineffectually, as such things in England rather frequently do; and everybody writes to "The Times," and nobody does anything else.

If the Americans don't embroil us in a war before long it will not be their fault. What with their swagger and bombast, what with their claims for indemnification, what with Ireland and Fenianism, and what with Canada, I have strong apprehen-



without suspicion, until whole regiments arose and killed their officers? A week ago, red tape, half bouncing and half pooh-poohing what it bounced at, would have scouted the idea of a Dublin jail not being able to hold a political prisoner. But for the blacks in Jamaica being over-impatient and before their time, the whites might have been exterminated, without a previous hint or suspicion that there was anything amiss. *Laissez aller*, and Britons never, never, never! —

Meantime, if your honour were in London, you would see a great embankment rising high and dry out of the Thames on the Middlesex shore, from Westminster Bridge to Blackfriars. A really fine work and really getting on. Moreover, a great system of drainage. Another really fine work, and likewise really getting on. Lastly, a muddle of railways in all directions possible and impossible, with no general public scheme, no general public supervision, enormous waste of money, no fixable responsibility, no accountability but under Lord Campbell's Act. I think of that accident in which I was preserved. Before the most furious and notable train in the four-and-twenty hours, the head of a gang of workmen takes up the rails. That train changes its time every day as the tide changes, and that head workman is not provided by the railway company with any clock or watch! Lord Shaftesbury wrote to me to ask me what I thought of an obligation on railway companies to put strong walls to all bridges and viaducts. I told him, of course, that the force of such a shock would carry away anything that any company could set up, and I added: "Ask the minister what *he* thinks about the votes of the railway interest in the House of Commons, and about his being afraid to lay a finger on it with an eye to his majority."

I seem to be grumbling, but I am in the best of humours. All goes well with me and mine, thank God!

Last night my gardener came upon a man in the garden and fired. The man returned the compliment by kicking him in the groin and causing him great pain. I set off, with a great mastiff-bloodhound I have, in pursuit. Could n't find the evil-doer, but had the greatest difficulty in preventing the dog from tearing two policemen down. They were coming towards us with professional *mystery*, and he was in the air on his way to *the throat of an eminently* respectable constable when I caught *him.*

My daughter Mary and her aunt Georgina send kindest regard and remembrance. Katey and her husband are going to try London this winter, but I rather doubt (for they are both delicate) their being able to weather it out. It has been blowing here tremendously for a fortnight, but to-day is like a spring day, and plenty of roses are growing over the labourers' cottages. The Great Eastern lies at her moorings beyond the window where I write these words; looks very dull and unpromising. A dark column of smoke from Chatham Dockyard, where the iron shipbuilding is in progress, has a greater significance in it, I fancy.

DXIII. MISS DICKENS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, November 14, 1865.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — As you want to know my views of the Sphinx, here they are. But I have only seen it once; and it is so extraordinarily well done, that it ought to be observed closely several times.

Any one who attentively notices the flames twirls will see that

wards the audience. The moment he has assisted the hidden man sufficiently, he closes the trap, and the conjurer then immediately removes the little draped table, and also the drapery of the larger table; when he places the box on the last-named table *with the slide on* for the head to come into it, he stands with his back to the audience and his face to the box, and masks the box considerably to facilitate the insertion of the head. As soon as he knows the head to be in its place, he undraws the slide. When the verses have been spoken and the trick is done, he loses no time in replacing the slide. The curtain is then immediately dropped, because the man cannot otherwise be got out of the table, and has no doubt had quite enough of it. With kindest regards to all at Penton,

Ever your most affectionate.

DXIV. MISS MARY BOYLE

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Saturday, January 6, 1866.

MY DEAR MARY, — Feeling pretty certain that I shall never answer your letter unless I answer it at once (I got it this morning), here goes!

I did not dramatise "The Master of Ravenswood," though I did a good deal towards and about the piece, having an earnest desire to put Scott, for once, upon the stage in his own gallant manner. It is *an enormous success*, and increases in attraction nightly. I have never seen the people in all parts of the house so leaning forward, in lines sloping towards the stage, earnestly and intently attractive, as while the story gradually unfolds itself. But the astonishing circumstance of all is, that Miss Leclercq (never thought of for Lucy till all other Lucies had failed) is marvellously good, highly pathetic, and almost unrecognisable in person! What note it touches in her, always dumb until now, I do not pretend to say, but there is no one on the stage who can play the contract scene better, or more simply and naturally, and I find it impossible to see it without crying! Almost every one plays well, the whole is exceedingly picturesque, and there is scarcely a movement throughout, or a look, that is not indicated by Scott. So you get a life romance with beautiful illustrations, and I do not expect ever again to see a book take up its bed and walk in like manner.

I am charmed to learn that you have had a freeze out of my ghost story. It rather did give me a shiver up the back in the writing. "Dr. Marigold" has just now accomplished his two hundred thousand. My only other news about myself is that I am doubtful whether to read or not in London this season. If I decide to do it at all, I shall probably do it on a large scale.

Many happy years to you, my dear Mary. So prays

Your ever affectionate

Jo.

DXV. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

GAD'S HILL, Thursday, January 18, 1866.

MY DEAR KENT, — I cannot tell you how grieved we all are here to know that you are suffering again. Your patient tone, however, and the hopefulness and forbearance of Ferguson's course, gives us some reassurance. Apropos of which latter reference I dined with Ferguson at the Lord Mayor's last Tuesday, and had a grimly distracted impulse upon me to defy the toast-master and rush into a speech about him and his

stands (like the house itself) very high, and that testimonials can be produced from credible persons who have recovered health and spirits here swiftly. Try us, only try us, and we are content to stake the reputation of the establishment on the result. Ever affectionately yours.

DXVI. JOHN FORSTER

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Friday, 26th January, 1866.

MY DEAR FORSTER, — I most heartily hope that your doleful apprehensions will prove unfounded. These changes from muggy weather to slight sharp frost, and back again, touch weak places, as I find by my own foot; but the touch goes by. May it prove so with you!

Yesterday Captain ——, Captain ——, and Captain —— dined at Gad's. They are, all three, naval officers of the highest reputation. —— is supposed to be the best sailor in our service. I said I had been remarking at home, apropos of the London, that I knew of no shipwreck of a large strong ship (not carrying weight of guns) in the open sea, and that I could find none such in the shipwreck books. They all agreed that the unfortunate Captain Martin *must* have been unacquainted with the truth as to what can and what cannot be done with a steamship having rigging and canvas; and that no sailor would dream of turning a ship's stern to such a gale — *unless his vessel could run faster than the sea.* —— said (and the other two confirmed) that the London was the better for everything that she lost aloft in such a gale, and that with her head kept to the wind by means of a storm topsail — which is hoisted from the deck and requires no man to be sent aloft, and can be set under the worst circumstances — the disaster could not have occurred. If he had no such sail, he could have improvised it, even of hammocks and the like. They said that under a Board of Inquiry into the wreck, any efficient witness must of necessity state this as the fact, and could not possibly avoid the conclusion that the seamanship was utterly bad; and as to the force of the wind, for which I suggested allowance, they all had been in West Indian hurricanes and in *typhoons, and had put* the heads of their ships to the wind *under the most adverse* circumstances.

I thought you might be interested in this, as you have no doubt been interested in the case. They had a great respect for the unfortunate Captain's character, and for his behaviour when the case was hopeless, but they had not the faintest doubt that he lost the ship and those two hundred and odd lives.

Ever affectionately.

DXVII. PERCY FITZGERALD

GAD'S HILL, Friday, February 2, 1866.

MY DEAR FITZGERALD, — I ought to have written to you days and days ago, to thank you for your charming book on Charles Lamb, to tell you with what interest and pleasure I read it as soon as it came here, and to add that I was honestly affected (far more so than your modesty will readily believe) by your intimate knowledge of those touches of mine concerning childhood.

Let me tell you now that I have not in the least cooled, after all, either as to the graceful sympathetic book, or as to the part in it with which I am honoured. It has become a matter of

hrough the system. If it should not seem to succeed on a easonable trial, I will then propose a consultation with some ne else. Of course I am not so foolish as to suppose that all ny work can have been achieved without *some* penalty, and I ave noticed for some time a decided change in my buoyancy nd hopefulness — in other words, in my usual "tone."

I shall wait to see Beard again on Monday, and shall most robably come down that day. If I should not, I will tele- raph after seeing him. Best love to Mamie.

DXIX. MRS. BROOKFIELD

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Tuesday, February 20, 1866.

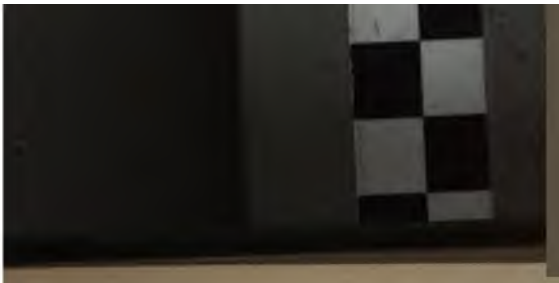
MY DEAR MRS. BROOKFIELD, — Having gone through your MS. (which I should have done sooner, but that I have not been very well), I write these few following words about it. Firstly, with a limited reference to its unsuitability to these pages. Secondly, with a more enlarged reference to the merits of the story itself.

If you will take any part of it and cut it up (in fancy) into the small portions into which it would have to be divided here for only a month's supply, you will (I think) at once discover the impossibility of publishing it in weekly parts. The scheme of the chapters, the manner of introducing the people, the progress of the interest, the places in which the principal places fall, are all hopelessly against it. It would seem as though the story were never coming, and hardly ever moving. There must be a special design to overcome that specially trying mode of publication, and I cannot better express the difficulty and labour of it than by asking you to turn over any two weekly numbers of "A Tale of Two Cities," or "Great Expectations," or Bulwer's story, or Wilkie Collins's, or Reade's, or "At the Bar," and notice how patiently and expressly the thing has to be planned for presentation in these fragments, and yet for afterwards fusing together as an uninterrupted whole.

Of the story itself I honestly say that I think highly. The style is particularly easy and agreeable, infinitely above ordinary writing, and *sometimes* reminds me of Mrs. Inchbald at her best. *The characters* are remarkably well observed, and with a *rare mixture of delicacy* and truthfulness. I observe this par-

ticularly in the brother and sister, and in Mrs. Neville. But it strikes me that you constantly hurry your narrative (and yet without getting on) *by telling it, in a sort of impetuous breathless way, in your own person, when the people should tell it and act it for themselves.* My notion always is, that when I have made the people to play out the play, it is, as it were, their business to do it, and not mine. Then, unless you really have led up to a great situation like Basil's death, you are bound in art to make more of it. Such a scene should form a chapter of itself. Impressed upon the reader's memory, it would go far to make the fortune of the book. Suppose yourself telling that affecting incident in a letter to a friend. Would n't you describe how you went through the life and stir of the streets and roads to the sick-room? Would n't you say what kind of room it was, what time of day it was, whether it was sunlight, starlight, or moonlight? Would n't you have a strong impression on your mind of how you were received, when you first met the look of the dying man, what strange contrasts were about you and struck you? I don't want you, in a novel, to present *yourself* to tell such things, but I want the things to be there. You make no more of the situation than the index might, or a descriptive playbill might in giving a summary of the tragedy under representation.

As a mere piece of mechanical workmanship, I think all your chapters should be shorter; that is to say, that they should be subdivided. Also, when you change from narrative to dialogue, or *vice versa*, you should make the transition more carefully. Also, taking the pains to sit down and recall the principal landmarks in your story, you should then make them far more elaborate and conspicuous than the rest. Even with these changes I do not believe that the story would attract the attention due to it, if it were published even in such monthly portions as the space of "Fraser" would admit of. Even so brightened, it would not, to the best of my judgment, express itself piecemeal. It seems to me to be so constituted as to require to be read "off the reel." As a book in two volumes I think it would have good claims to success, and good chances of obtaining success. But I suppose the polishing I have hinted at (not a meretricious adornment, but positively necessary to good work and good art) to have been first thoroughly administered.



Now don't hate me if you can help it. I can afford to be ated by some people, but I am not rich enough to put you in ossession of that luxury.

Ever faithfully yours.

P. S. — The MS. shall be delivered at your house to-morrow. nd your petitioner again prays not to be, etc.

DXX. ROBERT BROWNING

6, Southwick Place, Hyde Park,
Monday, March 12, 1866.

My dear Browning, — Will you dine here next Sunday t half-past six punctually, instead of with Forster? I am oing to read thirty times in London and elsewhere; and as I m coming out with "Dr. Marigold," I had written to ask Forster to come on Sunday and hear me sketch him. Forster ays (with his own boldness) that he is sure it would not bore ou to have that taste of his quality after dinner. I should be delighted if this should prove true. But I give warning that n that case I shall exact a promise from you to come to St. James's Hall one evening in April or May, and hear "David Copperfield," my own particular favourite.

Ever affectionately yours.

DXXI. MISS HOGARTH

Adelphi, Liverpool, Friday, April 13, 1866.

My dearest Georgy, — The reception at Manchester last night was quite a magnificent sight; the whole of the immense audience standing up and cheering. I thought them a little slow with "Marigold," but believe it was only the attention necessary in so vast a place. They gave a splendid burst at the end. And after "Nickleby" (which went to perfection), they set up such a call, that I was obliged to go in again. The unfortunate gas-man, a very steady fellow, got a fall off a ladder and sprained his leg. He was put to bed in a public opposite, and was left there, poor man.

This is the first very fine day we have had. I have taken advantage of it by crossing to Birkenhead and getting some air upon the water. It was fresh and beautiful.

I send my best love to Mamie, and hope she is better. I am, of course, tired (the pull of "Marigold" upon one's energy, in the Free Trade Hall, was great); but I stick to my tonic, and feel, all things considered, in very good tone. The room here (I mean the hall) being my special favourite and extraordinarily easy, is *almost* a rest!

DXXII. MISS DICKENS

ADELPHI, LIVERPOOL, Saturday, April 14, 1866.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — The police reported officially that three thousand people were turned away from the hall last night. I doubt if they were so numerous as that, but they carried in the outer doors and pitched into Dolby with great vigour. I need not add that every corner of the place was crammed. They were a very fine audience, and took enthusiastically every point in "Copperfield" and the "Trial." They made the reading a quarter of an hour longer than usual. One man advertised in the morning paper that he would give thirty shillings (double) for three stalls, but nobody would sell, and he did n't get in.

vent my platform from being captured as it was last time; but I don't feel at all sure that it will not be stormed at one of the two readings. Wills is to do the genteel to-night at the stalls, and Dolby is to stem the shilling tide *if* he can. The poor gas-man cannot come on, and we have got a new one here who is to go to Edinburgh with us. Of Edinburgh we know nothing, but as its first night has always been shady, I suppose it will stick to its antecedents.

I like to hear about Harness and his freshness. The let for the next reading at St. James's is "going," they report, "admirably." Lady Russell asked me to dinner to-morrow, and I have written her a note to-day. The rest has certainly done me good. I slept thoroughly well last night, and feel fresh. What to-night's work, and every night's work this week, may do contrariwise, remains to be seen.

I hope Harry's knee may be in the way of mending, from what you relate of it.

DXXIV. MISS DICKENS

WATERLOO HOTEL, EDINBURGH,
Wednesday, April 18, 1866.

We had a tremendous house again last night at Glasgow, and turned away great numbers. Not only that, but they were a most brilliant and delicate audience, and took "Marigold" with a fine sense and quickness not to be surpassed. The shillings pitched into Dolby again, and one man writes a sensible letter in one of the papers this morning, showing to *my* satisfaction (?) that they really had, through the local agent, some cause of complaint. Nevertheless, the shilling tickets are sold for to-morrow, and it seems to be out of the question to take any money at the doors, the call for all parts is so enormous. The thundering of applause last night was quite staggering, and my people checked off my reception by the minute hand of a watch, and stared at one another, thinking I should never begin. I keep quite well, have happily taken to sleeping these last three nights, and feel, all things considered, very little conscious of fatigue. I cannot reconcile my town medicine with the hours and journeys of reading life, and have therefore given it up for the time. But for the moment, I think I am better without it. What we are doing here I have not yet heard. I

write at half-past one, and we have been little more than an hour in the house. But I am quite prepared for the inevitable this first Edinburgh night. Endeavours have been made (from Glasgow yesterday) to telegraph the exact facts out of our local agent; but hydraulic pressure would n't have squeezed a straight answer out of him. "Friday and Saturday doing very well, Wednesday not so good." This was all electricity could discover.

I am going to write a line this post to Katie, from whom I have a note. I hope Harry's leg will now step out in the manner of the famous cork leg in the song.

DXXV. MISS HOGARTH

EDINBURGH, Thursday, April 19, 1866.

The house was more than twice better than any first night here previously. They were, as usual here, remarkably intelligent, and the reading went *brilliantly*. I have not sent up any newspapers, as they are generally so poorly written that you may know beforehand all the commonplaces that they will write. But the "Scotsman" has so pretty an article this

Two files of policemen and a double staff everywhere did the rest, and nothing could be better-tempered or more orderly. Tremendous enthusiasm with the "Carol" and "Trial." I was dead beat afterwards, that reading being twenty minutes longer than usual; but plucked up again, had some supper, slept well, and am quite right to-day. It is a bright day, and the express ride over from Glasgow was very pleasant.

Everything is gone here for to-night. But it is difficult to describe what the readings have grown to be. The let at St. James's Hall is not only immense for next Tuesday, but so large for the next reading afterwards, that Chappell writes: "That will be the greatest house of the three." From Manchester this morning they write: "Send us more tickets instantly, for we are sold out and don't know what to do with the people." Last night the whole of my money under the agreement had been taken. I notice that a great bank has broken at Liverpool, which may hurt us there, but when last heard of it was going as before. And the audience, though so enormous, do somehow express a personal affection, which makes them very strange and moving to see.

I have a story to answer you and your aunt with. Before I left Southwick Place for Liverpool, I received a letter from Glasgow, saying, "Your little Emily has been woo'd and married and a'! since you last saw her," and describing her house within a mile or two of the city, and asking me to stay there. I wrote the usual refusal, and supposed Mrs. —— to be some romantic girl whom I had joked with, perhaps at Allison's or where not. On the first night at Glasgow I received a bouquet from ——, and wore one of the flowers. This morning at the Glasgow station, —— appeared, and proved to be the identical Miss Emily, of whose marriage Dolby had told me on our coming through Preston. She was attired in magnificent raiment, and presented the happy ——.

DXXVII. MISS HOGARTH

LIVERPOOL, Thursday, April 26, 1866.

We noticed between London and Rugby (the first stoppage) something very odd in our carriage yesterday, not so much in its motion as in its sound. We examined it as well as we could out of both windows, but could make nothing of it. On our

arrival at Rugby, it was found to be on fire. And as it was in the middle of the train, the train had to be broken to get it off into a siding by itself and get another carriage on. With this slight exception we came down all right.

My voice is much better, I am glad to report, and I mean to try Beard's remedy after dinner to-day. This is all my present news.

DXXVIII. MISS HOGARTH

DOWN HOTEL, CLIFTON, Friday, May 11, 1866.

I received your note before I left Birmingham this morning. It has been very heavy work getting up at half-past six each morning after a heavy night, and I am not at all well to-day. We had a tremendous hall at Birmingham last night—two thousand one hundred people. I made a most ridiculous mistake. Had "Nickleby" on my list to finish with, instead of "Trial." Read "Nickleby" with great go, and the people remained. Went back again at ten and explained the accident, and said if they liked, I would give them the "Trial." They *did* like, and I had another half hour of it in that enormous place.

This stoppage of Overend and Gurney in the City will play the —— with all public gaieties, and with all the arts.

My cold is no better. John fell off a platform about ten feet high yesterday, and fainted. He looks all the colours of the rainbow to-day, but does not seem much hurt beyond being puffed up one hand, arm, and side.

DXXIX. MISS LILY BENZON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT, Monday, June 18, 1866.

MY DEAR LILY, — I am sorry that I cannot come to read to you "The Boots at the Holly-Tree Inn," as you ask me to do; but the truth is, that I am tired of reading at this present time, and have come into the country to rest and hear the birds sing. There are a good many birds, I dare say, in Kensington Palace Gardens, and upon my word and honour they are much better worth listening to than I am. So let them sing to you as hard as ever they can, while their sweet voices last (they will be silent when the winter comes); and very likely after you and I

ave eaten our next Christmas pudding and mince-pies, you and and Uncle Harry may all meet together at St. James's Hall; ncle Harry to bring you there, to hear the "Boots;" I to ceive you there, and read the "Boots;" and you (I hope) to plaud very much, and tell me that you like the "Boots." o, God bless you and me, and Uncle Harry, and the "Boots," id long life and happiness to us all!

Your affectionate friend.

P. S. — There 's a flourish!

DXXX. LORD LYTTON

GAD'S HILL, Monday, July 16, 1866.

MY DEAR LYTTON, — First, let me congratulate you on the onour which Lord Derby has conferred upon the peerage. nd next, let me thank you heartily for your kind letter.

I am very sorry to report that we are so encumbered with ngagements in the way of visitors coming here that we cannot e our way to getting to Knebworth yet.

Mary and Georgina send you their kind regard, and hope that he delight of coming to see you is only deferred.

Fitzgerald will be so proud of your opinion of his "Mrs. illotson," and will (I know) derive such great encouragement om it that I have faithfully quoted it, word for word, and sent on to him in Ireland. He is a very clever fellow (you may emember, perhaps, that I brought him to Knebworth on the uild day), and has charming sisters and an excellent position.

Ever affectionately yours.

DXXXI. B. W. PROCTER

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, August 13, 1866.

MY DEAR PROCTER, — I have read your biography of Charles amb with inexpressible pleasure and interest. I do not think possible to tell a pathetic story with a more unaffected and anly tenderness. And as to the force and vigour of the style, I did not know you I *should* have made sure that there was *printer's error in the opening* of your introduction, and that *e word "seventy" occupied* the place of "forty."

Let me, my dear friend, most heartily congratulate you on your achievement. It is not an ordinary triumph to do such justice to the memory of such a man. And I venture to add, that the fresh spirit with which you have done it impresses me as being perfectly wonderful.

Ever affectionately yours.

DXXXII. SIR JAMES EMERSON TENNENT

GAD'S HILL, Monday, August 20, 1866.

MY DEAR TENNENT, — I have been very much interested by your extract, and am strongly inclined to believe that the founder of the Refuge for Poor Travellers meant the kind of man to which it refers. Chaucer certainly meant the Pardonere to be a humbug, living on the credulity of the people. After describing the sham reliques he carried, he says: —

> But with these relikes whawne that he found
> A poure personne dwelling up on lond
> Upon a day he gat him more monnie
> Than that the personne got in monthes time,
> And thus, with fained flattering and japes

sistent with their dress and station, and they would lose, as characters, before the audience. The dialogue seems to be exactly what is wanted. Its simplicity (particularly in Mr. Boucicault's part) is often very effective; and throughout there is an honest, straight-to-the-purpose ruggedness in it, like the real life and the real people.

Secondly, as to the absence of the comic element. I really do not see how more of it could be got into the story, and I think Mr. Boucicault underrates the pleasant effect of his own part. The very notion of a sailor, whose life is not among those little courts and streets, and whose business does not lie with the monotonous machinery, but with the four wild winds, is a relief to me in reading the play. I am quite confident of its being an immense relief to the audience when they see the sailor before them, with an entirely different bearing, action, dress, complexion even, from the rest of the men. I would make him the freshest and airiest sailor that ever was seen; and through him I can distinctly see my way out of "the Black Country" into clearer air. (I speak as one of the audience, mind.) I should like something of this contrast to be expressed in the dialogue between the sailor and Jew, in the second scene of the second act. Again, I feel Widdicomb's part (which is charming, and ought to make the whole house cry) most agreeable and welcome, much better than any amount, in such a story, of mere comicality.

It is unnecessary to say that the play is done with a master's hand. Its closeness and movement are quite surprising. Its construction is admirable. I have the strongest belief in its making a great success. But I must add this proviso: I never saw a play so dangerously depending in critical places on strict natural propriety in the manner and perfection in the shaping of the small parts. Those small parts cannot take the play up, but they can let it down. I would not leave a hair on the head of one of them to the chance of the first night, but I would see, to the minutest particular, the make-up of every one of them at a night rehearsal.

Of course you are free to show this note to Mr. Boucicault, and I suppose you will do so; let me throw out this suggestion to him and you. Might it not ease the way with the Lord Chamberlain's office, and still more with the audience, when there are Manchester champions in it, if instead of "Manches-

ter" you used a fictitious name? When I did "Hard Times" I called the scene Coketown. Everybody knew what was meant, but every cotton-spinning town said it was the other cotton-spinning town.

I shall be up on Saturday, and will come over about midday, unless you name any other time.

Ever heartily.

DXXXIV. WALTER THORNBURY

"All the Year Round" Office,
Saturday, September 15, 1866.

My dear Thornbury, — Many thanks for your letter.

In reference to your Shakespeare queries, I am not so much enamoured of the first and third subjects as I am of the Ariosto inquiry, which should be highly interesting. But if you have so got the matter in your mind, as that its execution would be incomplete and unsatisfactory to you unless you write all the three papers, then by all means write the three, and I will most gladly take them. For some years I have had so much pleasure in reading you, that I can honestly warrant myself as what

[redacted]

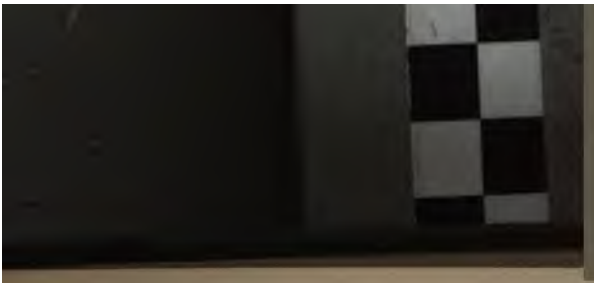
[redacted] sensation, for [redacted] don't you come [redacted] truly delighted [redacted]

[redacted] faithfully yours.

[redacted]

[redacted] December, 1866.

[redacted] common mistake [redacted] can help you to be [redacted] virtue of your own [redacted] "impenetrable barrier," "outsiders," and "charmed circles." I know that any one who can write what is suitable to the requirements of my own journal —for instance— is a person I am heartily glad to discover, and do not very often find. And I believe this to be no rare case in periodical literature. I cannot undertake to advise you in the abstract, as I number my unknown correspondents by the



ridiculous caution, but the indolent part of the public (a large part!) on such points tumble into extraordinary mistakes.

Faithfully yours always.

DXXXV. PERCY FITZGERALD

GAD'S HILL, Tuesday, November 6, 1866.

MY DEAR FITZGERALD, — It is always pleasant to me to hear from you, and I hope you will believe that this is not a mere fashion of speech.

Concerning the green covers, I find the leaves to be budding — on unquestionable newspaper authority; but, upon my soul, I have no other knowledge of their being in embryo! Really, I do not see a chance of my settling myself to such work until after I have accomplished forty-two readings, to which I stand pledged.

I hope to begin this series somewhere about the middle of January, in Dublin. Touching the details of the realisation of this hope, will you tell me in a line as soon as you can — *Is the exhibition room a good room for speaking in?*

Your mention of the late Sultan touches me nearly. He was the finest dog I ever saw, and between him and me there was a perfect understanding. But, to adopt the popular phrase, it was so very confidential that it "went no further." He would fly at anybody else with the greatest enthusiasm for destruction. I saw him, muzzled, pound into the heart of a regiment of the line; and I have frequently seen him, muzzled, hold a great dog down with his chest and feet. He has broken loose (muzzled) and come home covered with blood, again and again. And yet he never disobeyed me, unless he had first laid hold of a dog.

You heard of his going to execution, evidently supposing the procession to be a party detached in pursuit of something to kill or eat? It was very affecting. And also of his bolting a blue-eyed kitten, and making me acquainted with the circumstance by his agonies of remorse (or indigestion)?

I cannot find out that there is any one in Rochester (a sleepy old city) who has anything to tell about Garrick, except what is not true. His brother, *the wine merchant, would be more in Rochester way, I think. How on earth do you find time to do all these books?*

You make my hair stand on end; an agreeable sensation, for I am charmed to find that I have any. Why don't you come yourself and look after Garrick? I should be truly delighted to receive you.

My dear Fitzgerald, always faithfully yours.

DXXXVI. ANONYMOUS

GAD'S HILL, Thursday, 27th December, 1866.

DEAR MADAM, — You make an absurd though common mistake, in supposing that any human creature can help you to be an authoress, if you cannot become one in virtue of your own powers. I know nothing about "impenetrable barrier," "outsiders," and "charmed circles." I know that any one who can write what is suitable to the requirements of my own journal — for instance — is a person I am heartily glad to discover, and do not very often find. And I believe this to be no rare case in periodical literature. I cannot undertake to advise you in the abstract, as I number my unknown correspondents by the hundred. But if you offer anything to me for insertion in "All the Year Round," you may be sure that it will be honestly read, and that it will be judged by no test but its own merits and adaptability to those pages.

But I am bound to add that I do not regard successful fiction as a thing to be achieved in "leisure moments."

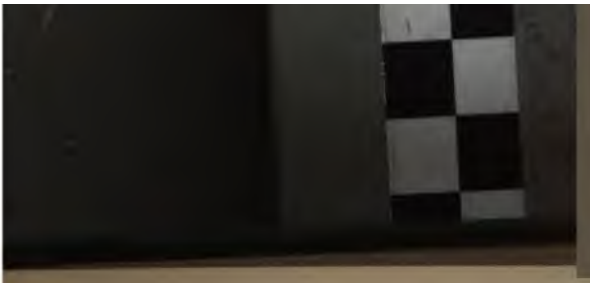
Faithfully yours.

DXXXVII. W. C. MACREADY

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday, December 28, 1866.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — I have received your letter with the utmost pleasure, and we all send our most affectionate love to you, Mrs. Macready, Katie, Johnny, and the boy of boys. All good Christmas and New Year greetings are to be understood as included.

You will be interested in knowing that, encouraged by the success of summer cricket-matches, I got up a quantity of foot-races and rustic sports in my field here on the 26th last past: as I have never yet had a case of drunkenness, the landlord of The Falstaff had a drinking-booth on the ground. All the



prizes I gave were in money, too. We had two thousand people here. Among the crowd were soldiers, navvies, and labourers of all kinds. Not a stake was pulled up, or a rope slackened, or one farthing's worth of damage done. To every competitor (only) a printed bill of general rules was given, with the concluding words: "Mr. Dickens puts every man upon his honour to assist in preserving order." There was not a dispute all day, and they went away at sunset rending the air with cheers, and leaving every flag on a six hundred yards' course as neat as they found it when the gates were opened at ten in the morning. Surely this is a bright sign in the neighbourhood of such a place as Chatham!

"Mugby Junction" turned, yesterday afternoon, the extraordinary number of two hundred and fifty thousand!

In the middle of next month I begin a new course of forty-two readings. If any of them bring me within reach of Cheltenham, with an hour to spare, I shall come on to you, even for that hour. More of this when I am afield and have my list, which Dolby (for Chappell) is now preparing.

Forster and Mrs. Forster were to have come to us next Monday, to stay until Saturday. I write "were," because I hear that Forster (who had a touch of bronchitis when he wrote to me on Christmas Eve) is in bed. Katie, who has been ill of low nervous fever, was brought here yesterday from London. She bore the journey much better than I expected, and so I hope will soon recover. This is my little stock of news.

I begin to discover in your riper years, that you have been secretly vain of your handwriting all your life. For I swear I see no change in it! What it always was since I first knew it (a year or two!) it *is*. This I will maintain against all comers.

Ever affectionately, my dearest Macready.

DXXXVIII. M. DE CERJAT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
New Year's Day, 1867.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — Thoroughly determined to be beforehand with "the middle of next summer," your penitent friend and remorseful correspondent thus addresses you.

The *big dog, on a day last* autumn, having seized a little girl *(sister to one of the servants)* whom he knew, and was bound

to respect, was flogged by his master, and then sentenced to be shot at seven next morning. He went out very cheerfully with the half-dozen men told off for the purpose, evidently thinking that they were going to be the death of somebody unknown. But observing in the procession an empty wheelbarrow and a double-barrelled gun, he became meditative, and fixed the bearer of the gun with his eyes. A stone deftly thrown across him by the village blackguard (chief mourner) caused him to look round for an instant, and he then fell dead, shot through the heart. Two posthumous children are at this moment rolling on the lawn; one will evidently inherit his ferocity, and will probably inherit the gun. The pheasant was a little ailing towards Christmas Day, and was found dead under some ivy in his cage, with his head under his wing, on the morning of the twenty-seventh of December, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six. I, proprietor of the remains of the two deceased, am working hard, getting up "Barbox" and "The Boy at Mugby," with which I begin a new series of readings in London on the fifteenth. Next morning I believe I start into the country. When I read, I *don't* write. I only edit, and have the proof-sheets sent me for the purpose. Here are your questions an-

My dear fellow, I have no more power to stop that mutilation of my books than you have. It is as certain as that every inventor of anything designed for the public good, and offered to the English Government, becomes *ipso facto* a criminal, to have his heart broken on the circumlocutional wheel. It is as certain as that the whole Crimean story will be retold whenever this country again goes to war. And to tell the truth, I have such a very small opinion of what the great genteel have done for us, that I am very philosophical indeed concerning what the great vulgar may do, having a decided opinion that they can't do worse.

This is the time of year when the theatres do best, there being still numbers of people who make it a sort of religion to see Christmas pantomimes. Having my annual houseful, I have, as yet, seen nothing. Fechter has neither pantomime nor burlesque, but is doing a new version of the old "Trente Ans de la Vie d'un Joueur." I am afraid he will not find his account in it. On the whole, the theatres, except in the articles of scenery and pictorial effect, are poor enough. But in some of the smaller houses there are actors who, if there were any dramatic headquarters as a school, might become very good. The most hopeless feature is, that they have the smallest possible idea of an effective and harmonious whole, each "going in" for himself or herself. The music-halls attract an immense public, and don't refine the general taste. But such things as they do are well done of their kind, and always briskly and punctually.

The American yacht race is the last sensation. I hope the general interest felt in it on this side will have a wholesome interest on that. It will be a woeful day when John and Jonathan throw their caps into the ring. The French Emperor is indubitably in a dangerous state. His Parisian popularity wanes, and his army are discontented with him. I hear on high authority that his secret police are always making discoveries that render him desperately uneasy.

You know how we have been swindling in these parts. But perhaps you don't know that Mr. ——, the "eminent" contractor, before he fell into difficulties, settled *one million* of *money* on his *wife*. *Such* a good and devoted husband!

My daughter Katie has been very ill of nervous fever. On *the 27th of December she* was in a condition to be brought

down here (old high-road and post-horses), and has been steadily getting better ever since. Her husband is here too, and is on the whole as well as he ever is or ever will be, I fear.

We played forfeit-games here, last night, and then pool. For a billiard-room has been added to the house since you were here. Come and play a match with me.

Always affectionately.

DXXXIX. MISS HOGARTH

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Monday, January 21, 1867.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — First I send you my most affectionate wishes for many, many happy returns of your birthday. That done, from my heart of hearts, I go on to my small report of myself.

The readings have produced such an immense effect here that we are coming back for two more in the middle of February. "Marigold" and the "Trial," on Friday night, and the "Carol," on Saturday afternoon, were a perfect furore; and the surprise about "Barbox" has been amusingly great. It is a

quiet, and quick. He has his needles and thread, buttons, and so forth, always at hand; and in travelling he is very systematic with the luggage. What with Dolby and what with this skilful valet, everything is made as easy to me as it possibly *can* be, and Dolby would do anything to lighten the work, and does everything.

There is great distress here among the poor (four thousand people relieved last Saturday at one work-house), and there is great anxiety concerning *seven mail-steamers some days overdue*. Such a circumstance as this last has never been known. It is supposed that some great revolving storm has whirled them all out of their course. One of these missing ships is an American mail, another an Australian mail.

Same Afternoon.

We have been out for hours in the bitter east wind, and walking on the seashore, where there is a broad strip of great blocks of ice. My hands are so rigid that I write with great difficulty.

We have been constantly talking of the terrible Regent's Park accident. I hope and believe that nearly the worst of it is now known.

DXL. MISS DICKENS

Chester, Tuesday, January 22, 1867.

My dearest Mamie, — We came over here from Liverpool at eleven this forenoon. There was a heavy swell in the Mersey breaking over the boat; the cold was nipping, and all the roads we saw as we came along were wretched. We find a very moderate let here; but I am myself rather surprised to know that a hundred and twenty stalls have made up their minds to the undertaking of getting to the hall. This seems to be a very nice hotel, but it is an extraordinary cold one. Our reading for to-night is "Marigold" and "Trial." With amazing perversity the local agent said to Dolby: "They hoped that Mr. Dickens *might* have given them 'The Boy at Mugby.'"

Barton, the gas-man who succeeded the man who sprained his leg, sprained *his* leg yesterday!! And that, not at his work, but in running down stairs at the hotel. However, he has hobbled through it so far, and I hope will hobble on, for he knows his work.

I have seldom seen a place look more hopelessly frozen up than this place does. The hall is like a Methodist chapel in low spirits, and with a cold in its head. A few blue people shiver at the corners of the streets. And this house, which is outside the town, looks like an ornament on an immense twelfth cake baked for 1847.

I am now going to the fire to try to warm myself, but have not the least expectation of succeeding. The sitting-room has two large windows in it, down to the ground and facing due east. The adjoining bedroom (mine) has also two large windows in it, down to the ground and facing due east. The very large doors are opposite the large windows, and I feel as if I were something to eat in a pantry.

DXLI. MISS HOGARTH

HEN AND CHICKENS, BIRMINGHAM,
Thursday, January 24, 1867.

At Chester we read in a snow-storm and a fall of ice. I think it was the worst weather I ever saw. Nevertheless, the people were enthusiastic. At Wolverhampton last night the

During the "Boy" last night there was an escape of gas from the side of my top batten, which caught the copper wire and was within a thread of bringing down the heavy reflector into the stalls. It was a very ticklish matter, though the audience knew nothing about it. I saw it, and the gas-man and Dolby saw it, and stood at that side of the platform in agonies. We all three calculated that there would be just time to finish and save it; when the gas was turned out the instant I had done, the whole thing was at its very last and utmost extremity. Whom it would have tumbled on, or what might have been set on fire, it is impossible to say.

I hope you rewarded your police escort on Tuesday night. It was the most tremendous night I ever saw at Chester.

DXLIII. MISS DICKENS

LEEDS, Friday, February 1, 1867.

We got here prosperously, and had a good (but not great) house for "Barbox" and "Boy" last night. For "Marigold" and "Trial," to-night, everything is gone. And I even have my doubts of the possibility of Dolby's cramming the people in. For "Marigold" and "Trial" at Manchester, to-morrow, we also expect a fine hall.

I shall be at the office for next Wednesday. If Charley Collins should have been got to Gad's, I will come there for that day. If not, I suppose we had best open the official bower again.

This is a beastly place, with a very good hotel. Except Preston, it is one of the nastiest places I know. The room is like a capacious coal cellar, and is incredibly filthy; but for sound it is perfect.

DXLIV. ANONYMOUS

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Tuesday, February 5, 1867.

DEAR SIR, — I have looked at the larger half of the first volume of your novel, and have pursued the more difficult points of the story through the other two volumes.

You will, of course, receive my opinion as that of an individual writer and student of art, who by no means claims to be infallible.

I think you are too ambitious, and that you have not sufficient knowledge of life or character to venture on so comprehensive an attempt. Evidences of inexperience in every way, and of your power being far below the situations that you imagine, present themselves to me in almost every page I have read. It would greatly surprise me if you found a publisher for this story, on trying your fortune in that line, or derived anything from it but weariness and bitterness of spirit.

On the evidence thus put before me, I cannot even entirely satisfy myself that you have the faculty of authorship latent within you. If you have not, and yet pursue a vocation towards which you have no call, you cannot choose but be a wretched man. Let me counsel you to have the patience to form yourself carefully, and the courage to renounce the endeavour if you cannot establish your case on a very much smaller scale. You see around you every day, how many outlets there are for short pieces of fiction in all kinds. Try if you can achieve any success within these modest limits (I have practised in my time what I preach to you), and in the mean time put your three

DXLVI. MISS DICKENS

GLASGOW, Sunday, February 17, 1867.

We arrived here this morning at our time to the moment, five minutes past ten. We turned away great numbers on both nights at Liverpool; and Manchester last night was a splendid spectacle. They cheered to that extent after it was over, that I was obliged to huddle on my clothes (for I was undressing to prepare for the journey), and go back again.

After so heavy a week, it *was* rather stiff to start on this long journey at a quarter to two in the morning; but I got more sleep than I ever got in a railway carriage before, and it really was not tedious. The travelling was admirable, and a wonderful contrast to my friend the Midland.

I am not by any means knocked up, though I have, as I had in the last series of readings, a curious feeling of soreness all round the body, which I suppose to arise from the great exertion of voice. It is a mercy that we were not both made really ill at Liverpool. On Friday morning I was taken so faint and sick, that I was obliged to leave the table. On the same afternoon the same thing happened to Dolby. We then found that a part of the hotel close to us was dismantled for painting, and that they were at that moment painting a green passage leading to our rooms, with a most horrible mixture of white lead and arsenic. On pursuing the inquiry, I found that the four lady book-keepers in the bar were all suffering from the poison.

DXLVII. MISS HOGARTH

BRIDGE OF ALLAN, Tuesday, February 19, 1867.

I was very glad to get your letter before leaving Glasgow this morning. This is a poor return for it, but the post goes out early, and we come in late.

Yesterday morning I was so unwell that I wrote to Frank Beard, from whom I shall doubtless hear to-morrow. I mention it, only in case you should come in his way, for I know how perversely such things fall out. I felt it a little more exertion to read afterwards, and I passed a sleepless night after that again; but otherwise I am in good force and spirits to-day. I may say, in the best force.

The quiet of this little place is sure to do me good. The little inn in which we are established seems a capital house of the best country sort.

DXLVIII. MISS DICKENS

GLASGOW, Thursday, February 21, 1867.

After two days' rest at the Bridge of Allan I am in renewed force, and have nothing to complain of but inability to sleep. I have been in excellent air all day since Tuesday at noon, and made an interesting walk to Stirling yesterday, and saw its lions, and (strange to relate) was not bored by them. Indeed, they left me so fresh that I knocked at the gate of the prison, presented myself to the governor, and took Dolby over the jail, to his unspeakable interest. We then walked back again to our excellent country inn.

Inclosed is a letter from Alfred, which you and your aunt will be interested in reading, and which I meant to send you sooner but forgot it. Wonderful as it is to mention, the sun shines here to-day! But to counterbalance that phenomenon I [redacted]

always prize it highly. The terms in which you send me that mark of your remembrance [1] are more gratifying to me than I can possibly express to you; for they assure me that there is nothing but good will left between you and me and a people for whom I have a real regard, and to whom I would not wilfully have given an offence or done an injustice for any worldly consideration.

Believe me, very faithfully yours.

DL. MISS HOGARTH

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, Wednesday, March 6, 1867.

The readings have made an immense effect in this place, and it is remarkable that although the people are individually rough, collectively they are an unusually tender and sympathetic audience; while their comic perception is quite up to the high London standard. The atmosphere is so very heavy that yesterday we escaped to Tynemouth for a two hours' sea walk. There was a high north wind blowing and a magnificent sea running. Large vessels were being towed in and out over the stormy bar, with prodigious waves breaking on it; and spanning the restless uproar of the waters was a quiet rainbow of transcendent beauty. The scene was quite wonderful. We were in the full enjoyment of it when a heavy sea caught us, knocked us over, and in a moment drenched us, and filled even our pockets. We had nothing for it but to shake ourselves together (like Doctor Marigold) and dry ourselves as well as we could by hard walking in the wind and sunshine! But we were wet through for all that when we came back here to dinner after half an hour's railway ride.

I am wonderfully well, and quite fresh and strong. Have had to doctor Dolby for a bad cold; have not caught it (yet), and have set him on his legs again.

Scott is striking the tents and loading the baggages, so I must deliver up my writing-desk. We meet, please God, on Tuesday.

[1] A copy of Benisch's Hebrew and English Bible with the inscription: "Presented to Charles Dickens, in grateful and admiring recognition of his having exercised the noblest quality man can possess — that of atoning for an injury as soon as conscious of having inflicted it."

DLI. MISS HOGARTH

SHELBOURNE HOTEL, DUBLIN, Friday, March 15, 1867.

We made our journey through an incessant snow-storm on Wednesday night; at last got snowed up among the Welsh mountains in a tremendous storm of wind, came to a stop, and had to dig the engine out. We went to bed at Holyhead at six in the morning of Thursday, and got aboard the packet at two yesterday afternoon. It blew hard, but as the wind was right astern, we only rolled and did not pitch much. As I walked about on the bridge all the four hours, and had cold salt beef and biscuit there and brandy and water, you will infer that my Channel training has not worn out.

Our "business" here is *very bad*, though at Belfast it is enormous. There is no doubt that great alarm prevails here. This hotel is constantly filling and emptying as families leave the country, and set in a current to the steamers. There is apprehension of some disturbance between to-morrow night and Monday night (both inclusive), and I learn this morning that all the drinking-shops are to be closed from to-night until Tuesday. It

There is considerable alarm here beyond all question, and great depression in all kinds of trade and commerce. To-morrow being St. Patrick's Day, there are apprehensions of some disturbance, and croakers predict that it will come off between to-night and Monday night. Of course there are preparations on all sides, and large musters of soldiers and police, though they are kept carefully out of sight. One would not suppose, walking about the streets, that any disturbance was impending; and yet there is no doubt that the materials of one lie smouldering up and down the city and all over the country. [I have a letter from Mrs. Bernal Osborne this morning, describing the fortified way in which she is living in her own house in the County Tipperary.]

You may be quite sure that your venerable parent will take good care of himself. If any riot were to break out, I should immediately stop the readings here. Should all remain quiet, I begin to think they will be satisfactorily remunerative after all. At Belfast, we shall have an enormous house. I read "Copperfield" and "Bob" here on Monday; "Marigold" and "Trial" at Belfast, on Wednesday; and "Carol" and "Trial" here, on Friday. This is all my news, except that I am in perfect force.

DLIII. MISS HOGARTH

Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin, Sunday, March 17, 1867.

Everything remains in appearance perfectly quiet here. The streets are gay all day, now that the weather has improved, and singularly quiet and deserted at night. But the whole place is secretly girt in with a military force. To-morrow night is supposed to be a critical time; but in view of the enormous preparations, I should say that the chances are at least one hundred to one against any disturbance.

I cannot make sure whether I wrote to you yesterday, and told you that we had done very well at the first reading after all, even in money. The reception was prodigious, and the readings are the town talk. But I rather think I did actually write this to you. My doubt on the subject arises from my having deliberated *about* writing on a Saturday.

The most curious and, for facilities of mere destruction, such as firing houses in different quarters, the most dangerous piece

of intelligence imparted to me on authority is, that the Dublin domestic men servants as a class are all Fenians.

DLIV. MISS HOGARTH

BELFAST, Wednesday, March 20, 1867.

The post goes out at twelve, and I have only time to report myself. The snow not lying between this and Dublin, we got here yesterday to our time, after a cold but pleasant journey. Fitzgerald came on with us. I had a really charming letter from Mrs. Fitzgerald, asking me to stay there. She must be a perfectly unaffected and genuine lady. There are kind messages to you and Mary in it. I have sent it on to Mary, who will probably in her turn show it to you. We had a wonderful crowd at Dublin on Monday, and greatest appreciation possible. We have a good let, in a large hall, here to-night. But I am perfectly convinced that the worst part of the Fenian business is to come yet.

All about the Fitzgeralds and everything else when we meet.

DLVI. MISS HOGARTH

Norwich, Friday, March 29, 1867.

The reception at Cambridge last night was something to be proud of in such a place. The colleges mustered in full force from the biggest guns to the smallest, and went far beyond even Manchester in the roars of welcome and the rounds of cheers. All through the readings, the whole of the assembly, old men as well as young, and women as well as men, took everything with a heartiness of enjoyment not to be described. The place was crammed, and the success the most brilliant I have ever seen.

What we are doing in this sleepy old place I don't know, but I have no doubt it is mild enough.

DLVII. WALTER THORNBURY

Office of "All the Year Round,"
Monday, April 1, 1867.

My dear Thornbury, — I am very doubtful indeed about "Vaux," and have kept it out of the number in consequence. The mere details of such a rascal's proceedings, whether recorded by himself or set down by the Reverend Ordinary, are not wholesome for a large audience, and are scarcely justifiable (I think) as claiming to be a piece of literature. I can understand Barrington to be a good subject, as involving the representation of a period, a style of manners, an order of dress, certain habits of street life, assembly-room life, and coffee-room life, etc.; but there is a very broad distinction between this and mere Newgate Calendar. The latter would assuredly damage your book, and be protested against to me. I have a conviction of it, founded on constant observation and experience here.

Your kind invitation is extremely welcome and acceptable to me, but I am sorry to add that I must not go a visiting. For this reason: So incessantly have I been "reading," that I have not once been at home at Gad's Hill since last January, and am little likely to get there before the middle of May. Judge how the *master's eye must* be kept on the place when it does at *length get a look at it after* so long an absence! I hope you

will descry in this a reason for coming to me again, instead of my coming to you.

The extinct prize-fighters, as a body, I take to be a good subject, for much the same reason as George Barrington. Their patrons were a class of men now extinct too, and the whole ring of those days (not to mention Jackson's rooms in Bond Street) is a piece of social history. Now Vaux is not, nor is he even a phenomenon among thieves.

Faithfully yours always.

DLVIII. HON. ROBERT LYTTON

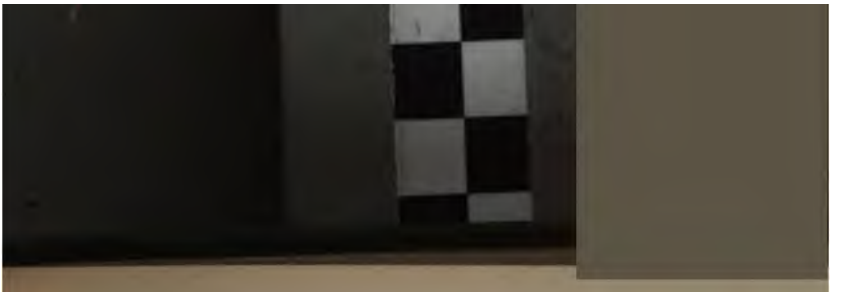
GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, April 17, 1867.

MY DEAR ROBERT LYTTON,[1] — It would have been really painful to me, if I had seen you and yours at a reading of mine in right of any other credentials than my own. Your appreciation has given me higher and purer gratification than your modesty can readily believe. When I first entered on this interpretation of myself (then quite strange in the public ear), I was sustained by the hope that I could drop into some hearts some new expression of the meaning of my books, that would touch them in a new way. To this hour that purpose is so strong in me, and so real are my fictions to myself, that, after hundreds of nights, I come with a feeling of perfect freshness to that little red table, and laugh and cry with my hearers, as if I had never stood there before. You will know from this what a delight it is to be delicately understood, and why your earnest words cannot fail to move me.

We are delighted to be remembered by your charming wife, and I am intrusted with more messages from this house to her than you would care to give or withhold, so I suppress them myself and absolve you from the difficulty.

Affectionately yours.

[1] The Hon. Robert Lytton, in literature well known as "Owen Meredith."



DLIX. CLARKSON STANFIELD, R. A.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,
Thursday, April 18, 1867.

MY DEAR STANNY, — The time of year reminds me how the months have gone, since I last heard from you through Mrs. Stanfield.

I hope you have not thought me unmindful of you in the mean while. I have been almost constantly travelling and reading. England, Ireland, and Scotland have laid hold of me by turns, and I have had no rest. As soon as I had finished this kind of work last year, I had to fall to work upon "All the Year Round" and the Christmas number. I was no sooner quit of that task, and the Christmas season was but run out to its last day, when I was tempted into another course of fifty readings that are not yet over. I am here now for two days, and have not seen the place since Twelfth Night. When a reading in London has been done, I have been brought up for it from some great distance, and have next morning been carried back again. But the fifty will be "paid out" (as we say at sea) by the middle of May, and then I hope to see you.

Reading at Cheltenham the other day, I saw Macready, who sent his love to you. His face was much more massive and as it used to be, than when I saw him previous to his illness. His wife takes admirable care of him, and is on the happiest terms with his daughter Katie. His boy by the second marriage is a jolly little fellow, and leads a far easier life than the children you and I remember, who used to come in at dessert and have each a biscuit and a glass of water, in which last refreshment I was always convinced that they drank, with the gloomiest malignity, "Destruction to the gormandising grown-up company!"

I hope to look up your latest triumphs on the day of the Academy dinner. Of course as yet I have had no opportunity of even hearing of what any one has done. I have been (in a general way) snowed up for four months. The locomotive with which I was going to Ireland was dug out of the snow at midnight, in Wales. Both *passages* across were made in a furious snow-storm. *The snow lay* ankle-deep in Dublin, and froze hard *at Belfast. In Scotland it* slanted before a perpetual east wind.

In Yorkshire, it derived novelty from thunder and lightning. Whirlwinds everywhere I don't mention.

God bless you and yours. If I look like some weather-beaten pilot when we meet, don't be surprised. Any mahogany-faced stranger who holds out his hand to you will probably turn out, on inspection, to be the old original Dick.

Ever, my dear Stanny, your faithful and affectionate.

P. S. — I wish you could have been with me (of course in a snow-storm) one day on the pier at Tynemouth. There was a very heavy sea running, and a perfect fleet of screw merchantmen were plunging in and out on the turn of the tide at high water. Suddenly there came a golden horizon, and a most glorious rainbow burst out, arching one large ship, as if she were sailing direct for heaven. I was so enchanted by the scene that I became oblivious of a few thousand tons of water coming on in an enormous roller, and was knocked down and beaten by its spray when it broke, and so completely wetted through and through, that the very pockets in my pocket-book were full of sea.

I saw him for the last time on earth. May God be with her, and with you all, in your great loss.

Affectionately yours always.

DLXI. W. H. WILLS

Thursday, June 6, 1867.

My dear Wills, — I cannot tell you how warmly I feel your letter, or how deeply I appreciate the affection and regard in which it originates. I thank you for it with all my heart.

You will not suppose that I make light of any of your misgivings if I present the other side of the question. Every objection that you make strongly impresses me, and will be revolved in my mind again and again.

When I went to America in '42, I was so much younger, but (I think) very much weaker too. I had had a painful surgical operation performed shortly before going out, and had had the labour from week to week of "Master Humphrey's Clock." My life in the States was a life of continual speechmaking (quite as laborious as reading), and I was less patient and more irritable then than I am now. My idea of a course of readings in America is, that it would involve far less travelling than you suppose, that the large first-class rooms would absorb the whole course, and that the receipts would be very much larger than your estimate, unless the demand for the readings is ENORMOUSLY EXAGGERATED ON ALL HANDS. There is considerable reason for this view of the case. And I can hardly think that all the speculators who beset, and all the private correspondents who urge me, are in a conspiracy or under a common delusion.

I shall never rest much while my faculties last, and (if I know myself) have a certain something in me that would still be active in rusting and corroding me, if I flattered myself that I was in repose. On the other hand, I think that my habit of easy self-abstraction and withdrawal into fancies has always refreshed and strengthened me in short intervals wonderfully. I always seem to myself to have rested far more than I have worked; and I do really believe that I have some exceptional faculty of accumulating young feelings in short pauses, which obliterates a quantity of wear and tear.

My worldly circumstances (such a large family considered)

are very good. I don't want money. All my possessions are free and in the best order. Still, at fifty-five or fifty-six, the likelihood of making a very great addition to one's capital in half a year is an immense consideration. . . . I repeat the phrase, because there should be something large to set against the objections.

I dine with Forster to-day, to talk it over. I have no doubt he will urge most of your objections and particularly the last, though American friends and correspondents he has have undoubtedly staggered him more than I ever knew him to be staggered on the money question. Be assured that no one can present any argument to me which will weigh more heartily with me than your kind words, and that whatever comes of my present state of abeyance, I shall never forget your letter or cease to be grateful for it.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully yours.

DLXII. HENRY F. CHORLEY

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, June 2, 1867.

the plot of the rest to the last line. It gives a series of "narratives," but it is a very curious story, wild, and yet domestic, with excellent character in it, and great mystery. It is prepared with extraordinary care, and has every chance of being a hit. It is in many respects much better than anything he has done. The question is, how shall we fill up the blank between Mabel's Progress and Wilkie? What do you think of proposing to Fitzgerald to do a story three months long? I dare say he has some unfinished or projected something by him.

I have an impression that it was not Silvester who tried Eliza Fenning, but Knowles. One can hardly suppose Thornbury to make such a mistake, but I wish you would look into the Annual Register. I have added a final paragraph about the unfairness of the judge, whoever he was. I distinctly recollect to have read of his "putting down" of Eliza Fenning's father when the old man made some miserable suggestion in his daughter's behalf (this is not noticed by Thornbury), and he also stopped some suggestion that a knife thrust into a loaf adulterated with alum would present the appearance that these knives presented. But I may have got both these points from looking up some pamphlets in Upcott's collection which I once had.

Your account of your journey reminds me of one of the latest American stories, how a traveller by stage-coach said to the driver: "Did you ever see a snail, sir?" "Yes, sir." "Where did you meet him, sir?" "I *did n't* meet him, sir!" "Wa'al, sir, I think you did, if you 'll excuse me, for I 'm damned if you ever overtook him." Ever faithfully.

DLXIV. MRS. HENDERSON

GAD'S HILL, Thursday, July 4, 1867.

MY DEAR MRS. HENDERSON, — I was more shocked than surprised by the receipt of your mother's announcement of our poor dear Marguerite's [1] death. When I heard of the consultation, and recalled what had preceded it and what I have seen here, my hopes were very slight.

Your letter did not reach me until last night, and thus I could not avoid remaining here to-day, to keep an American appointment of unusual importance. You and your mother

[1] Formerly Miss Marguerite Power.

both know, I think, that I had a great affection for Marguerite, that we had many dear remembrances together, and that her self-reliance and composed perseverance had awakened my highest admiration in later times. No one could have stood by her grave to-day with a better knowledge of all that was great and good in her than I have, or with a more loving remembrance of her through all her phases since she first came to London a pretty, timid girl.

I do not trouble your mother by writing to her separately. It is a sad, sad task to write at all. God help us!

Faithfully yours.

DLXV. PERCY FITZGERALD

GAD'S HILL, July 21, 1867.

MY DEAR FITZGERALD, — I am heartily glad to get your letter, and shall be thoroughly well pleased to study you again in the pages of "A. Y. R."

I have settled nothing yet about America, but am going to send Dolby out on the 3d of next month to survey the land, and come back with a report on some heads whereon I require accurate information. Proposals (both from American and English speculators) of a very tempting nature have been repeatedly made to me; but I cannot endure the thought of binding myself to give so many readings there whether I like it or no, and, if I go at all, am bent on going with Dolby single-handed.

I have been doing two things for America; one, the little story to which you refer; the other, four little papers for a child's magazine. I like them both, and think the latter a queer combination of a child's mind with a grown-up joke. I have had them printed to assure correct printing in the United States. You shall have the proofs to read, with the greatest pleasure. On second thoughts, why should n't I send you the children's proof by this same post? I will, as I have it here, send it under another cover. When you return it, you shall have the short story. Believe me, always heartily yours.

July 28, 1867.

I am glad you like the children, and particularly glad you like the pirate. I remember very well when I had a general idea of occupying that place in history at the same age. But I loved more desperately than Boldheart.

DLXVI. MISS HOGARTH

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Friday Night, August 2, 1867.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — I cannot get a boot on — wear a slipper on my left foot, and consequently am here under difficulties. My foot is occasionally painful, but not very. I don't think it worth while consulting anybody about it as yet. I make out so many reasons against supposing it to be gouty, that I really do not think it is.

Dolby begs me to send all manner of apologetic messages for his going to America. He is very cheerful and hopeful, but evidently feels the separation from his wife and child very much. His sister [1] was at Euston Square this morning, looking very well. Sainton, too, very light and jovial.

With the view of keeping myself and my foot quiet, I think I will not come to Gad's Hill until Monday. If I don't appear before, send basket to Gravesend to meet me, leaving town by the 12.10 on Monday. This is important, as I could n't walk a quarter of a mile to-night for five hundred pounds.

Love to all at Gad's.

DLXVII. W. H. WILLS

GAD'S HILL, Monday, September 2, 1867.

MY DEAR WILLS, — Like you, I was shocked when this new discovery burst upon me on Friday, though, unlike you, I never could believe in ——, solely (I think) because, often as I have tried him, I never found him standing by my desk when I was writing a letter without trying to read it.

I fear there is no doubt that since ——'s discharge, he (——) has stolen money at the readings. A case of an abstracted shilling seems to have been clearly brought home to him by Chappell's people, and they know very well what *that* means. I supposed a very clear keeping off from Anne's husband (whom I recommended for employment to Chappell) to have been referable only to ——; but now I see how hopeless and unjust it would be to expect belief from him with two such cases within his knowledge.

But don't let the thing spoil your holiday. If we try to do

[1] Madame Sainton Dolby.

our duty by people we employ, by exacting their proper service from them on the one hand, and treating them with all possible consistency, gentleness, and consideration on the other, we know that we do right. Their doing wrong cannot change our doing right, and that should be enough for us.

So I have given *my* feathers a shake, and am all right again. Give *your* feathers a shake, and take a cheery flutter into the air of Hertfordshire.

Great reports from Dolby and also from Fields! But I keep myself quite calm, and hold my decision in abeyance until I shall have book, chapter, and verse before me. Dolby hoped he could leave Uncle Sam on the 11th of this month.

Sydney has passed as a lieutenant, and appeared at home yesterday, all of a sudden, with the consequent golden garniture on his sleeve, which I, God forgive me, stared at without the least idea that it meant promotion.

I am glad you see a certain unlikeness to anything in the American story. Upon myself it has made the strangest impression of reality and originality!! And I feel as if I had read something (by somebody else), which I should never get out of my mind!!! The main idea of the narrator's position towards the other people was the idea that I *had* for my next novel in "A. Y. R." But it is very curious that I did not in the least see how to begin his state of mind until I walked into Hoghton Towers one bright April day with Dolby.

Faithfully ever.

DLXVIII. F. D. FINLAY

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, September 3, 1867.

This is to certify that the undersigned victim of a periodical paragraph-disease, which usually breaks out once in every seven years (proceeding to England by the overland route to India and per Cunard line to America, where it strikes the base of the Rocky Mountains, and, rebounding to Europe, perishes on the steppes of Russia), is *not* in a "critical state of health," and has *not* consulted "eminent surgeons," and never was better in his life, and is *not* recommended to proceed to the United States for "cessation from literary labour," and has not had so much as a headache for twenty years.

CHARLES DICKENS.

DLXIX. JAMES T. FIELDS

September 3, 1867.

My dear Fields, — Your cheering letter of the 21st of August arrived here this morning. A thousand thanks for it. I begin to think (nautically) that I "head west'ard." You shall hear from me fully and finally as soon as Dolby shall have reported personally.

The other day I received a letter from Mr. ——, of New York (who came over in the winning yacht, and described the voyage in "The Times,") saying he would like to see me. I made an appointment in London, and observed that when he *did* see me he was obviously astonished. While I was sensible that the magnificence of my appearance would fully account for his being overcome, I nevertheless angled for the cause of his surprise. He then told me that there was a paragraph going round the papers to the effect that I was "in a critical state of health." I asked him if he was sure it was n't "cricketing" state of health. To which he replied, Quite. I then asked him down here to dinner, and he was again staggered by finding me in sporting training; also much amused.

Yesterday's and to-day's post bring me this unaccountable paragraph from hosts of uneasy friends, with the enormous and wonderful addition that "eminent surgeons" are sending me to America for "cessation from literary labour"!!! So I have written a quiet line to "The Times," certifying to my own state of health, and have also begged Dixon to do the like in "The Athenæum." I mention the matter to you, in order that you may contradict, from me, if the nonsense should reach America unaccompanied by the truth. But I suppose that "The New York Herald" will probably have got the letter from Mr. —— aforesaid. . . .

Charles Reade and Wilkie Collins are here; and the joke of the time is to feel my pulse when I appear at table, and also to inveigle innocent mesengers to come over to the summer-house, where I write (the place is quite changed since you were here, and a tunnel under the high-road connects this shrubbery with the front garden), to ask, with their compliments, how I find myself *now*.

If I come to America this next November, even you can

hardly imagine with what interest I shall try "Copperfield" on an American audience, or, if they give me their heart, how freely and fully I shall give them mine. We will ask Dolby then whether he ever heard it before.

I cannot thank you enough for your invaluable help to Dolby. He writes that at every turn and moment the sense and knowledge and tact of Mr. Osgood are inestimable to him.

Ever, my dear Fields, faithfully yours.

DLXX. CHARLES FECHTER

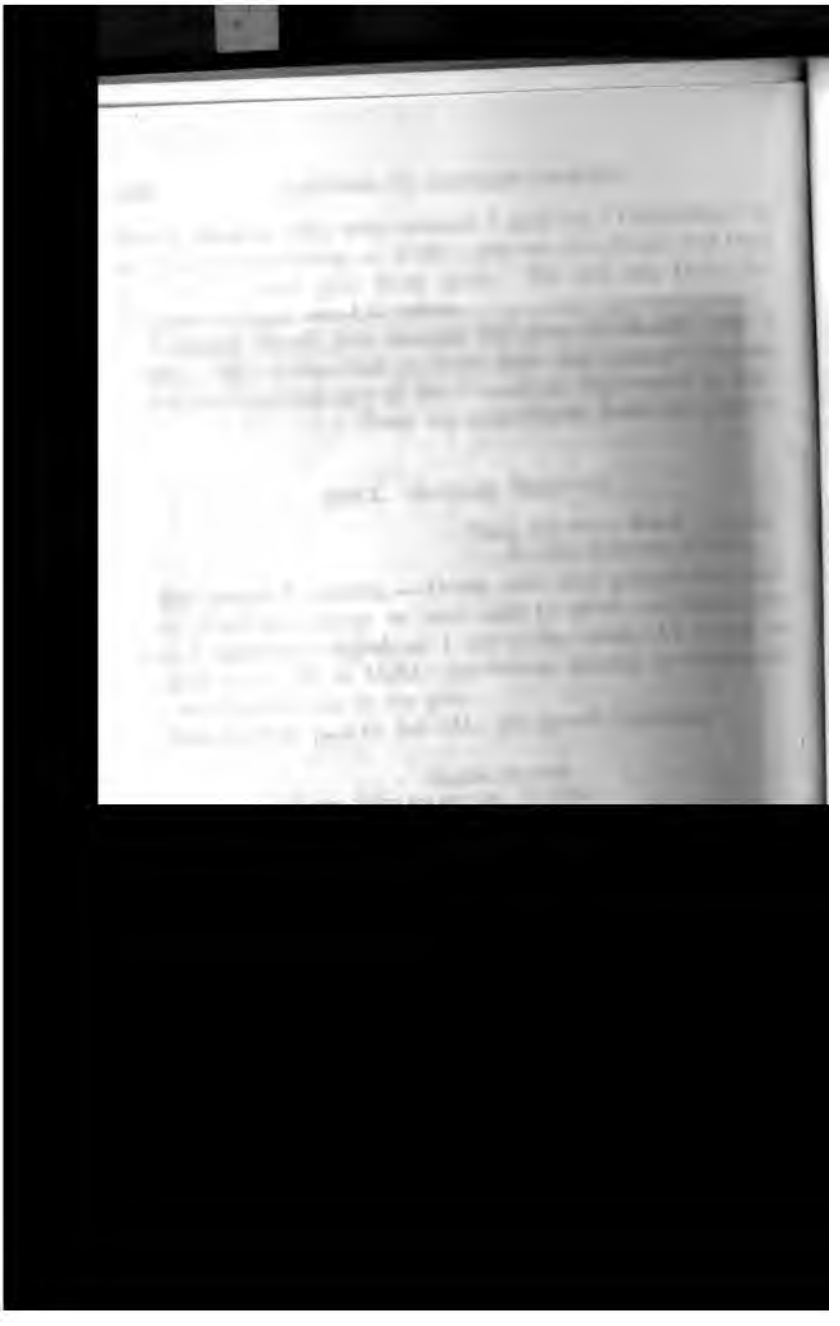
"All the Year Round" Office,
Monday, September 16, 1867.

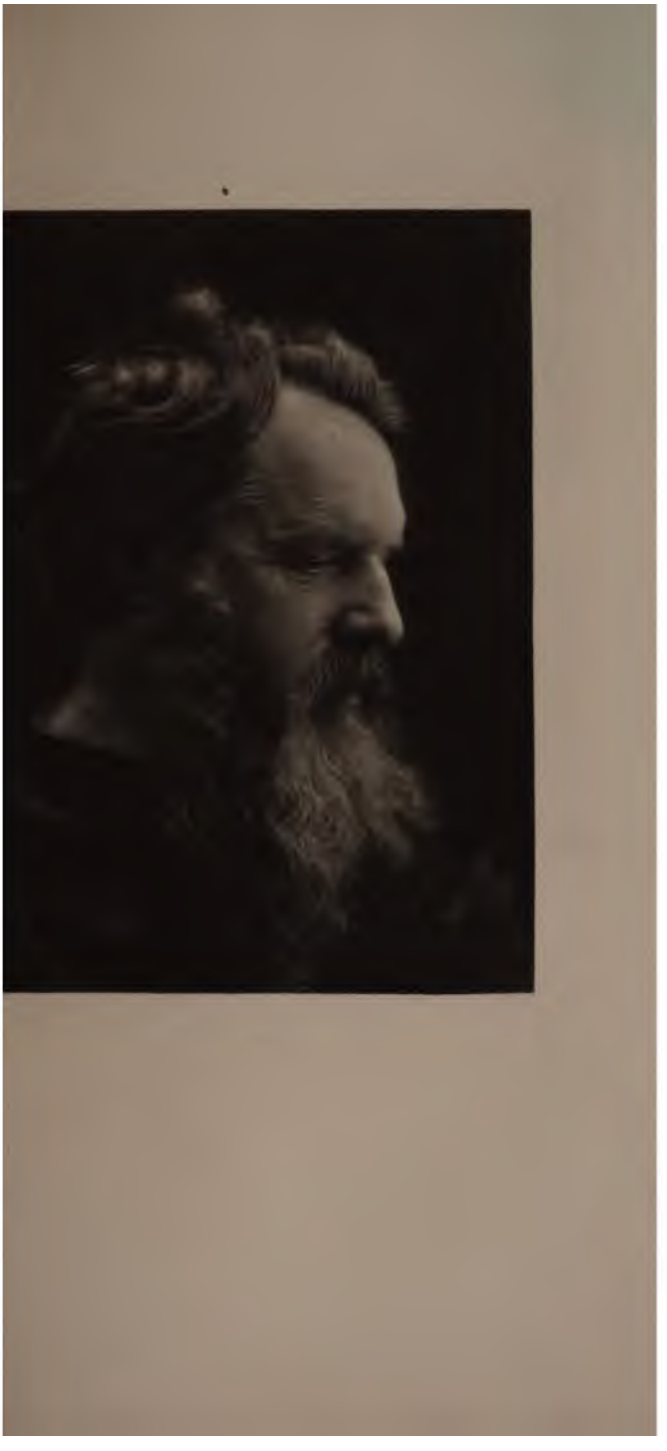
My dear Fechter, — Going over the prompt-book carefully, I see one change in your part to which (on Lytton's behalf) I positively object, as I am quite certain he would not consent to it. It is highly injudicious besides, as striking out the best known line in the play.

Turn to your part in Act III., the speech beginning —

Pauline, *by pride*

James T. Fields





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(There will not be a man in the house from any newspaper who would not detect mutilations in that speech, moreover.)

Ever.

DLXXI. LORD LYTTON

"All the Year Round" Office,
Tuesday, September 17, 1867.

My dear Lytton, — I am happy to tell you that the play was admirably done last night, and made a marked impression. Pauline is weak, but so carefully trained and fitted into the picture as to be never disagreeable, and sometimes (as in the last scene) very pathetic. Fechter has played nothing nearly so well as Claude since he played in Paris in the "Dame aux Camélias," or in London as Ruy Blas. He played the fourth act as finely as Macready, and the first much better. The dress and bearing in the fifth act are quite new, and quite excellent.

Of the scenic arrangements, the most noticeable are: the picturesque struggle of the cottage between the taste of an artist and the domestic means of poverty (expressed to the eye with infinite tact); the view of Lyons (Act V., Scene 1), with a foreground of quay wall which the officers are leaning on, waiting for the general; and the last scene — a suite of rooms giving on a conservatory at the back, through which the moon is shining. You are to understand that all these scenic appliances are subdued to the piece, instead of the piece being sacrificed to them; and that every group and situation has to be considered, not only with a reference to each by itself, but to the whole story.

Beauséant's speaking the original contents of the letter was a decided point, and the immense house was quite breathless when the Tempter and the Tempted stood confronted as he made the proposal.

There was obviously a great interest in seeing a Frenchman play the part. The scene between Claude and Gaspar (the small part very well done) was very closely watched for the same reason, and was loudly applauded. I cannot say too much of the brightness, intelligence, picturesqueness, and care of Fechter's impersonation throughout. There was a remarkable delicacy in his gradually drooping down on his way home with his bride, until he fell upon the table, a crushed heap of shame and remorse, while his mother told Pauline the story. His

gradual recovery of himself as he formed better resolutions was equally well expressed; and his being at last upright again and rushing enthusiastically to join the army, brought the house down.

I wish you could have been there. He never spoke English half so well as he spoke your English; and the audience heard it with the finest sympathy and respect. I felt that I should have been very proud indeed to have been the writer of the play. Ever affectionately.

DLXXII. MISS HOGARTH

Monday, September 30, 1867.

My dearest Georgy, — The telegram is despatched to Boston: "Yes. Go ahead." After a very anxious consultation with Forster, and careful heed of what is to be said for and against, I have made up my mind to see it out. I do not expect as much money as the calculators estimate, but I cannot set the hope of a large sum of money aside.

I am so nervous with travelling and anxiety to decide something, that I can hardly write. But I send you these few words as my dearest and best friend.

DLXXIII. MISS DICKENS

Office of "All the Year Round,"
No. 26, Wellington Street, Strand, London, W. C.,
Monday, September 30, 1867.

My dearest Mamie, — You will have had my telegram that I go to America. After a long discussion with Forster, and consideration of what is to be said on both sides, I have decided to go through with it. I doubt the profit being as great as the calculation makes it, but the prospect is sufficiently alluring to turn the scale on the American side.

Unless I telegraph to the contrary, I will come to Gravesend (send basket there) by 12 train on Wednesday. Love to all.

We have telegraphed "Yes" to Boston.

I begin to feel myself drawn towards America, as Darnay, in the "Tale of Two Cities," was attracted to the Loadstone Rock, Paris.

DLXXIV. JAMES T. FIELDS

[Early in] October, 1867.

MY DEAR FIELDS, — I hope the telegraph clerks did not mutilate out of recognition or reasonable guess the words I added to Dolby's last telegram to Boston. "'Tribune' London correspondent totally false." Not only is there not a word of truth in the pretended conversation, but it is so absurdly unlike me that I cannot suppose it to be even invented by any one who ever heard me exchange a word with mortal creature. For twenty years I am perfectly certain that I have never made any other allusion to the republication of my books in America than the good-humoured remark, "that if there had been international copyright between England and the States, I should have been a man of very large fortune, instead of a man of moderate savings, always supporting a very expensive public position." Nor have I ever been such a fool as to charge the absence of international copyright upon individuals. Nor have I ever been so ungenerous as to disguise or suppress the fact that I have received handsome sums for advance sheets. When I was in the States, I said what I had to say on the question, and there an end. I am absolutely certain that I have never since expressed myself, even with soreness, on the subject. Reverting to the preposterous fabrication of the London correspondent, the statement that I ever talked about "these fellows" who republished my books or pretended to know (what I don't know at this instant) who made how much out of them, or ever talked of their sending me "conscience money," is as grossly and completely false as the statement that I ever said anything to the effect that I could not be expected to have an interest in the American people. And nothing can by any possibility be falser than that. Again and again, in these pages ("All the Year Round") I have expressed my interest in them. You will see it in the "Child's History of England." You will see it in the last preface to "American Notes." Every American who has ever spoken with me in London, Paris, or where not, knows whether I have frankly said, "You could have no better introduction to me than your country." And for years and years, when I have been asked about reading in America, my invariable reply has been, "I have so many friends there,

and constantly receive so many earnest letters from personally unknown readers there, that, but for domestic reasons, I would go to-morrow." I think I must, in the confidential intercourse between you and me, have written you to this effect more than once.

The statement of the London correspondent from beginning to end is false. It is false in the letter and false in the spirit. He may have been misinformed, and the statement may not have originated with him. With whomsoever it originated, it never originated with me, and consequently is false. More than enough about it.

As I hope to see you so soon, my dear Fields, and as I am busily at work on the Christmas number, I will not make this a longer letter than I can help. I thank you most heartily for your proffered hospitality, and need not tell you that if I went to any friend's house in America, I would go to yours. But the readings are very hard work, and I think I cannot do better than observe the rule on that side of the Atlantic which I observe on this, of never, under such circumstances, going to a friend's house, but always staying at a hotel. I am able to

Bow Street Runners (as compared with Modern Detectives)? Yes.

Vauxhall and Ranelagh in the Last Century? Most decidedly. Don't forget Miss Burney.

Smugglers? No. Overdone.

Lacenaire? No. Ditto.

Madame Laffarge? No. Ditto.

Fashionable Life Last Century? Most decidedly Yes.

Debates on the Slave Trade? Yes, generally. But beware of the Pirates, as we did them in the beginning of "Household Words."

Certainly I acquit you of all blame in the Bedford case. But one cannot do otherwise than sympathise with a son who is reasonably tender of his father's memory. And no amount of private correspondence, we must remember, reaches the readers of a printed and published statement.

I told you some time ago that I believed the arsenic in Eliza Fenning's case to have been administered by the apprentice. I never was more convinced of anything in my life than of the girl's innocence, and I want words in which to express my indignation at the muddle-headed story of that parsonic blunderer whose audacity and conceit distorted some words that fell from her in the last days of her baiting. Ever faithfully yours.

DLXXVI. LORD LYTTON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, October 14, 1867.

MY DEAR LYTTON, — I am truly delighted to find that you are so well pleased with Fechter in "The Lady of Lyons." It was a labour of love with him, and I hold him in very high regard.

Don't give way to laziness, and *do* proceed with that play. There never was a time when a good new play was more wanted or had a better opening for itself. Fechter is a thorough artist, and what he may sometimes want in personal force is compensated by the admirable whole he can make of a play, and his perfect understanding of its presentation as a picture to the eye and mind.

I leave London on the 8th of November early, and sail from Liverpool on the 9th. Ever affectionately yours.

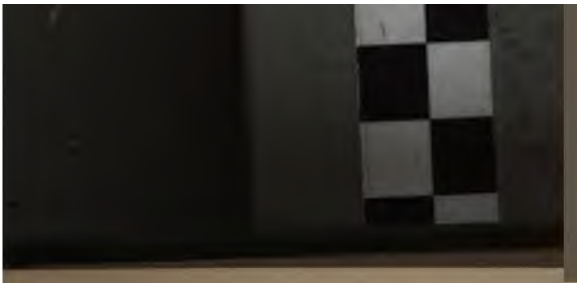
DLXXVII. LORD LYTTON

"All the Year Round" Office,
Friday, October 25, 1867.

My dear Lytton, — I have read the Play [1] with great attention, interest, and admiration; and I need not say to *you* that the art of it — the fine construction — the exquisite nicety of the touches — with which it is wrought out — have been a study to me in the pursuit of which I have had extraordinary relish.

Taking the Play as it stands, I have nothing whatever to add to your notes and memoranda of the points to be touched again, except that I have a little uneasiness in that burst of anger and inflexibility consequent on having been deceived, coming out of Hegio. I see the kind of actor who *must* play Hegio, and I see that the audience will not believe in his doing anything so serious. (I suppose it would be impossible to get this effect out of the mother — or through the mother's influence, instead of out of the godfather of Hegiopolis?)

Now, as to the classical ground and manners of the Play. I



of starting fair with the audience, it is my conviction that you would start with them against you and would have to win them over.

Furthermore, with reference to your note to me on this head, you take up a position with reference to poor dear Talfourd's "Ion" which I altogether dispute. It never was a popular play, I say. It derived a certain amount of out-of-door's popularity from the circumstances under which, and the man by whom, it was written. But I say that it never was a popular play on the stage, and never made out a case of attraction there.

As to changing the ground to Russia, let me ask you, did you ever see the "Nouvelles Russes" of Nicolas Gogol, translated into French by Louis Viardot? There is a story among them called "Tarass Boulba," in which, as it seems to me, all the conditions you want for such transplantation are to be found. So changed, you would have the popular sympathy with the Slave or Serf, or Prisoner of War, from the first. But I do not think it is to be got, save at great hazard, and with lamentable waste of force on the ground the Play now occupies.

I shall keep this note until to-morrow to correct my conviction if I can see the least reason for correcting it; but I feel very confident indeed that I cannot be shaken in it.

Saturday.

I have thought it over again, and have gone over the play again with an imaginary stage and actors before me, and I am still of the same mind. Shall I keep the MS. till you come to town?

Believe me, ever affectionately yours.

DLXXVIII. W. H. WILLS

26, Wellington Street, Sunday, November 3, 1867.

My dear Wills, — If you were to write me many such warm-hearted letters as you send this morning, my heart would fail me! There is nothing that so breaks down my determination, or shows me what an iron force I put upon myself, and how weak it is, as a touch of true affection from a tried friend.

All that you so *earnestly* say about the good will and devotion *of all engaged, I perceived* and deeply felt last night. It *moved me even more than* the demonstration itself, though I do

suppose it was the most brilliant ever seen. When I got up to speak, but for taking a desperate hold of myself, I should have lost my sight and voice and sat down again.

God bless you, my dear fellow. I am, ever and ever,

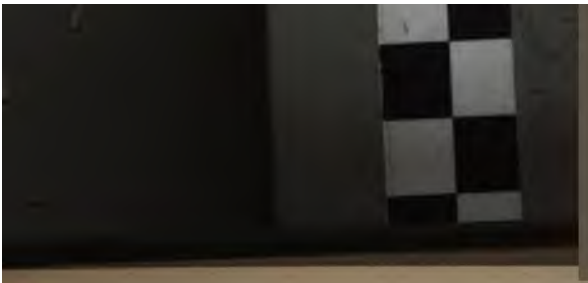
Your affectionate.

DLXXIX. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Tuesday, November 5, 1867.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — A thousand thanks for your kind letter, and many congratulations on your having successfully attained a dignity which I never allow to be mentioned in my presence. Charley's children are instructed from their tenderest months only to know me as "Wenerables," which they sincerely believe to be my name, and a kind of title that I have received from a grateful country.

Alas! I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you before I presently go to Liverpool. Every moment of my time is preoccupied. But I send you my sincere love, and am always truthful to the dear old days, and the memory of one of the



Many of the passengers are American, and I am already on the best terms with nearly all the ship.

We began our voyage yesterday a very little while after you left us, which was a great relief. The wind is S. E. this morning, and if it would keep so we should go along nobly. My dearest love to your aunt, and also to Katie and all the rest. I am in very good health, thank God, and as well as possible.

DLXXXI. MISS HOGARTH

ABOARD THE CUBA, FIVE DAYS OUT,
Wednesday, November 13, 1867.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — As I wrote to Mamie last, I now write to you, or mean to do it, if the motion of the ship will let me.

We are very nearly halfway to-day. The weather was favourable for us until yesterday morning, when we got a head-wind which still stands by us. We have rolled and pitched, of course, but on the whole have been wonderfully well off. I have had headache and have felt faint once or twice, *but have not been sick at all.* My spacious cabin is very noisy at night, as the most important working of the ship goes on outside my window and over my head; but it is very airy, and if the weather be bad and I can't open the window, I can open the door all night. If the weather be fine (as it is now), I can open both door and window, and write between them. Last night, I got a foot-bath under the dignified circumstances of sitting on a camp-stool in my cabin, and having the bath (and my feet) in the passage outside. The officers' quarters are close to me, and, as I know them all, I get reports of the weather and the way we are making when the watch is changed, and I am (as I usually am) lying awake. The motion of the screw is at its slightest vibration in my particular part of the ship. The silent captain, reported gruff, is a very good fellow and an honest fellow. Kelly has been ill all the time, and not of the slightest use, and is ill now. Scott always cheerful, and useful, and ready; a better servant for the kind of work there never can have been. Young Lowndes has been fearfully sick until mid-day yesterday. His cabin is pitch dark, and full of black beetles. He shares mine until nine o'clock at night, when Scott carries him off to bed. He also dines with me in

my magnificent chamber. This passage in winter-time cannot be said to be an enjoyable excursion, but I certainly am making it under the best circumstances. (I find Dolby to have been enormously popular on board, and to have known everybody and gone everywhere.)

So much for my news, except that I have been constantly reading, and find that "Pierra" that Mrs. Hogge sent me by Katie to be a very remarkable book, not only for its grim and horrible story, but for its suggestion of wheels within wheels, and sad human mysteries. Baker's second book not nearly so good as his first, but his first anticipated it.

We hope to get to Halifax either on Sunday or Monday, and to Boston either on Tuesday or Wednesday. The glass is rising high to-day, and everybody on board is hopeful of an easterly wind.

Saturday, 16th.

Last Thursday afternoon a heavy gale of wind sprang up and blew hard until dark, when it seemed to lull. But it then came on again with great violence, and blew tremendously all night. The noise and the rolling and plunging of the ship were awful. Nobody on board could get any sleep, and pum-

Sunday, 17th.

At four o'clock this morning we got into bad weather again, and the state of things at breakfast-time was unutterably miserable. Nearly all the passengers in their berths — no possibility of standing on deck — sickness and groans — impracticable to pass a cup of tea from one pair of hands to another. It has slightly moderated since (between two and three in the afternoon I write), and the sun is shining, but the rolling of the ship surpasses all imagination or description.

We expect to be at Halifax about an hour after midnight, and this letter shall be posted there, to make certain of catching the return mail on Wednesday. Boston is only thirty hours from Halifax.

Best love to Mamie, and to Katie and Charley. I know you will report me and my love to Forster and Mrs. Forster. I write with great difficulty, wedged up in a corner, and having my heels on the paper as often as the pen. Kelly worse than ever, and Scott better than ever.

My desk and I have just arisen from the floor.

DLXXXII. MISS DICKENS

Parker House, Boston, Thursday, November 21, 1867.

I arrived here on Tuesday night, after a very slow passage from Halifax against head-winds. All the tickets for the first four readings here (all yet announced) were sold immediately on their being issued.

You know that I begin on the 2d of December with "Carol" and "Trial"? Shall be heartily glad to begin to count the readings off.

This is an immense hotel, with all manner of white marble public passages and public rooms. I live in a corner high up, and have a hot and cold bath in my bedroom (communicating with the sitting-room), and comforts not in existence when I was here before. The cost of living is enormous, but happily we can afford it. I dine to-day with Longfellow, Emerson, Holmes, and Agassiz. Longfellow was here yesterday. Perfectly white in hair and beard, but a remarkably handsome and notable-looking man. The city has increased enormously in *five-and-twenty years. It has grown more mercantile — is like Leeds mixed with Preston,* and flavoured with New Brighton;

but for smoke and fog you substitute an exquisitely bright light air. I found my rooms beautifully decorated (by Mrs. Fields) with choice flowers, and set off by a number of good books. I am not much persecuted by people in general, as Dolby has happily made up his mind that the less I am exhibited for nothing the better. So our men sit outside the room door and wrestle with mankind.

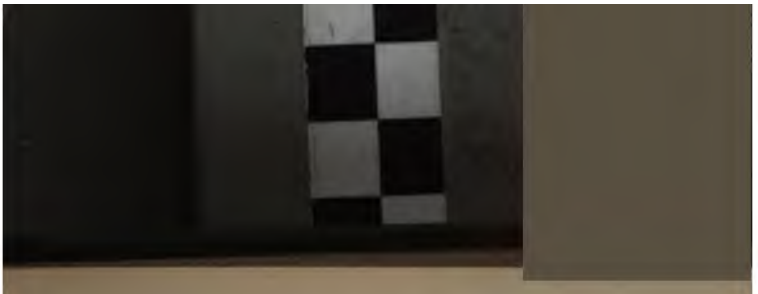
We had speech-making and singing in the saloon of the Cuba after the last dinner of the voyage. I think I have acquired a higher reputation from drawing out the captain, and getting him to take the second in "All 's Well," and likewise in "There 's not in the wide world" (your parent taking first), than from anything previously known of me on these shores. I hope the effect of these achievements may not dim the lustre of the readings. We also sang (with a Chicago lady and a strong-minded woman from I don't know where) "Auld Lang Syne," with a tender melancholy, expressive of having all four been united from our cradles. The more dismal we were, the more delighted the company were. Once (when we paddled i' the burn) the captain took a little cruise round the compass on his own account, touching at the "Canadian Boat Song," and taking in supplies at "Jubilate," "Seas between us braid ha' roared," and roared like the seas themselves. Finally, I proposed the ladies in a speech that convulsed the stewards, and we closed with a brilliant success. But when you dine with Mr. Forster, ask him to read to you how we got on at church in a heavy sea. Hillard has just been in and sent his love "to those dear girls." He has grown much older. He is now District Attorney of the State of Massachusetts, which is a very good office. Best love to your aunt and Katie, and Charley and all his house, and all friends.

DLXXXIII. MISS HOGARTH

PARKER HOUSE, BOSTON, Monday, November 25, 1867.

I cannot remember to whom I wrote last, but it will not much matter if I make a mistake; this being generally to report myself so well that I am constantly chafing at not having begun to-night instead of this night week.

The tickets being all sold for next week, and no other announcement being yet made, there is nothing new in that way



ell of. Dolby is over at New York, where we are at our
' end how to keep tickets out of the hands of speculators.
gan is staying with me; came yesterday to breakfast, and
home to-morrow. Fields and Mrs. Fields also dined yes-
ay. She is a very nice woman, with a rare relish for humour
a most contagious laugh. The Bostonians, having been
informed that I wish to be quiet, really leave me as much
s I should be in Manchester or Liverpool. This I cannot
ct to last elsewhere; but it is a most welcome relief here,
have all the readings to get up. The people are perfectly
and perfectly agreeable. If I stop to look in at a shop-
low, a score of passers-by stop; and after I begin to read, I
ot expect, in the natural course of things, to get off so
y. But I every day take from seven to ten miles in peace.
ommunications about readings incessantly come in from all
s of the country. We take no offer whatever, lying by with
plans until after the first series in New York, and designing,
e make a furore there, to travel as little as possible. I fear
all have to take Canada at the end of the whole tour.
make such strong representations from Montreal and
nto, and from Nova Scotia, — represented by St. John
Halifax, — of the slight it would be to them if I wound up
the States, that I am shaken.

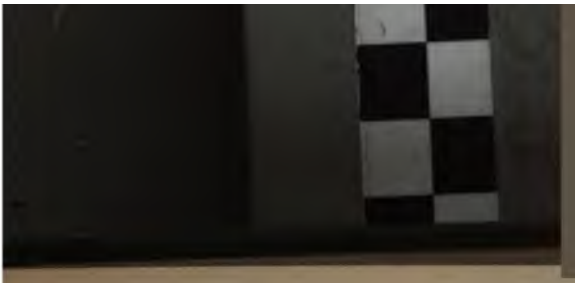
is sad to see Longfellow's house (the house in which his
was burnt) with his young daughters in it, and the shadow
at terrible story. The young undergraduates of Cambridge
is a professor there) have made a representation to him that
are five hundred strong, and cannot get one ticket. I
know what is to be done for them; I suppose I must
there somehow. We are all in the clouds until I shall
broken ground in New York, as to where readings will be
ible and where impossible.

gassiz is one of the most natural and jovial of men. I go
a visiting as little as I can, but still have to dine, and, what
orse, sup pretty often. Socially, I am (as I was here
re) wonderfully reminded of Edinburgh when I had many
ds in it.

our account and Mamie's of the return journey to London
me great pleasure. I was delighted with your report of
kie, and not surprised by Chappell's coming out gallantly.
y anxiety to get to work is greater than I can express,

because time seems to be making no movement towards home until I shall be reading hard. Then I shall begin to count and count and count the upward steps to May.

If ever you should be in a position to advise a traveller going on a sea voyage, remember that there is some mysterious service done to the bilious system when it is shaken by baked apples. Noticing that they were produced on board the Cuba every day at lunch and dinner, I thought I would make the experiment of always eating them freely. I am confident that they did wonders, not only at the time, but in stopping the imaginary pitching and rolling after the voyage is over, from which many good amateur sailors suffer. I have hardly had the sensation at all, except in washing of a morning. At that time I still hold on with one knee to the washing-stand, and could swear that it rolls from left to right. The Cuba does not return until Wednesday, the 4th December. You may suppose that every officer on board is coming on Monday, and that Dolby has provided extra stools for them. His work is very hard indeed. Cards are brought to him every minute in the day; his correspondence is immense; and he is jerked off to New York, and I don't know where else, on the shortest notice and the most



DLXXXIV. CHARLES DICKENS, JR.

PARKER HOUSE, BOSTON, U. S.,
Saturday, November 30, 1867.

MY DEAR CHARLEY, — You will have heard before now how fortunate I was on my voyage, and how I was not sick for a moment. These screws are tremendous ships for carrying on, and for rolling, and their vibration is rather distressing. But my little cabin, being for'ard of the machinery, was in the best part of the vessel, and I had as much air in it, night and day, as I chose. The saloon being kept absolutely without air, I mostly dined in my own den, in spite of my being allotted the post of honour on the right hand of the captain.

The tickets for the first four readings here (the only readings announced) were all sold immediately, and many are now re-selling at a large premium. The tickets for the first four readings in New York (the only readings announced there also) were on sale yesterday, and were all sold in a few hours. The receipts are very large indeed; but engagements of any kind and every kind I steadily refuse, being resolved to take what is to be taken myself. Dolby is nearly worked off his legs, is now at New York, and goes backwards and forwards between this place and that (about the distance from London to Liverpool, though they take nine hours to do it) incessantly. Nothing can exceed his energy and good humour, and he is extremely popular everywhere. My great desire is to avoid much travelling, and try to get the people to come to me, instead of my going to them. If I can effect this to any moderate extent, I shall be saved a great deal of knocking about. My original purpose was not to go to Canada at all; but Canada is so up in arms on the subject that I think I shall be obliged to take it at last. In that case I should work round to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and then take the packet for home.

As they don't seem (Americans who have heard me on their travels excepted) to have the least idea here of what the readings are like, and as they are accustomed to mere readings out of a book, I am inclined to think the excitement will increase when I shall have begun. Everybody is very kind and considerate, and I *have a number of old* friends here, at the Bar and *connected with the University*. I am now negotiating to bring out

the dramatic version of "No Thoroughfare" at New York. It is quite upon the cards that it may turn up trumps.

I was interrupted in that place by a call from my old secretary in the States, Mr. Putnam. It was quite affecting to see his delight in meeting his old master again. And when I told him that Anne was married, and that I had (unacknowledged) grandchildren, he laughed and cried together. I suppose you don't remember Longfellow, though he remembers you in a black velvet frock very well. He is now white-haired and white-bearded, but remarkably handsome. He still lives in his old house, where his beautiful wife was burnt to death. I dined with him the other day, and could not get the terrific scene out of my imagination. She was in a blaze in an instant, rushed into his arms with a wild cry, and never spoke afterwards.

My love to Bessie, and to Mekitty, and all the babbies. I will lay this by until Tuesday morning, and then add a final line to it. Ever, my dear Charley, your affectionate father.

Tuesday, December 3, 1867.

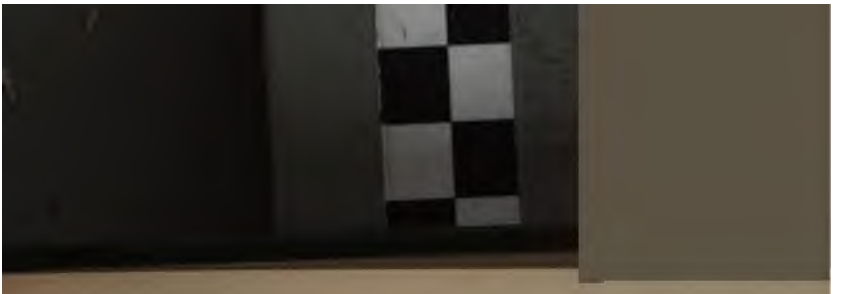
Success last night beyond description or exaggeration. The whole city is quite frantic about it to-day, and it is impossible that prospects could be more brilliant.

DLXXXV. MISS DICKENS

PARKER HOUSE, BOSTON, Sunday, December 1, 1867.

I received yours of the 18th November, yesterday. As I left Halifax in the Cuba that very day, you probably saw us telegraphed in "The Times" on the 19th.

Dolby came back from another run to New York, this morning. The receipts are very large indeed, far exceeding our careful estimate made at Gad's. I think you had best in future (unless I give you intimation to the contrary) address your letters to me, at the Westminster Hotel, Irving Place, New York City. It is a more central position than this, and we are likely to be much more there than here. I am going to set up a brougham in New York, and keep my rooms at that hotel. The account of Matilda is a very melancholy one, and really distresses me. What she must sink into, it is sad to consider. However, there was nothing for it but to send her away, that is quite clear.



They are said to be a very quiet audience here, appreciative but not demonstrative. I shall try to change their character a little.

I have been going on very well. A horrible custom obtains in these parts of asking you to dinner somewhere at half-past two, and to supper somewhere else about eight. I have run this gauntlet more than once, and its effect is, that there is no day for any useful purpose, and that the length of the evening is multiplied by a hundred. Yesterday I dined with a club at half-past two, and came back here at half-past eight, with a general impression that it was at least two o'clock in the morning. Two days before, I dined with Longfellow at half-past two, and came back at eight, supposing it to be midnight. To-day we have a state dinner-party in our rooms at six, Mr. and Mrs. Fields, and Mr. and Mrs. Bigelow. (He is a friend of Forster's, and was American Minister in Paris.) There are no negro waiters here, all the servants are Irish — willing, but not able. The dinners and wines are very good. I keep our own rooms well ventilated by opening the windows, but no window is ever opened in the halls or passages, and they are so overheated by a great furnace, that they make me faint and sick. The air is like that of a pre-Adamite ironing-day in full blast. Your respected parent is immensely popular in Boston society, and its cordiality and unaffected heartiness are charming. I wish I could carry it with me.

The leading New York papers have sent men over for to-morrow night with instructions to telegraph columns of descriptions. Great excitement and expectation everywhere. Fields says he has looked forward to it so long that he knows he will die at five minutes to eight.

At the New York barriers, where the tickets are on sale and the people ranged as at the Paris theatres, speculators went up and down offering "twenty dollars for anybody's place." The money was in no case accepted. One man sold two tickets for the second, third, and fourth night for "one ticket for the first, fifty dollars (about seven pounds ten shillings), and a brandy cocktail," which is an iced bitter drink. The weather has been rather muggy and languid until yesterday, when there was the coldest wind blowing that I ever felt. In the night it froze very *hard, and to-day the sky* is beautiful.

Tuesday, December 3.

Most magnificent reception last night, and most signal and complete success. Nothing could be more triumphant. The people will hear of nothing else and talk of nothing else. Nothing that was ever done here, they all agree, evoked any approach to such enthusiasm. I was quite as cool and quick as if I were reading at Greenwich, and went at it accordingly.

DLXXXVI. MISS HOGARTH

Boston, Wednesday, December 4, 1867.

I find that by going off to the Cuba myself this morning I can send you the inclosed for Mary Boyle (I don't know how to address her), whose usual flower for my button-hole was produced in the most extraordinary manner here last Monday night! All well and prosperous. "Copperfield" and "Bob" last night; great success.

DLXXXVII. MISS MARY BOYLE

Boston, December 4, 1867.

My dear Meery, — You can have no idea of the glow of pleasure and amazement with which I saw your remembrance of me lying on my dressing-table here last Monday night. Whosoever undertook that commission accomplished it to a miracle. But you must go away four thousand miles, and have such a token conveyed to *you*, before you can quite appreciate the feeling of receiving it. Ten thousand loving thanks.

Immense success here, and unbounded enthusiasm. My largest expectations far surpassed.

Ever your affectionate

Jo.

DLXXXVIII. MISS DICKENS

Westminster Hotel, Irving Place, New York City,
Wednesday, December 11, 1867.

Amazing success here. A very fine audience; *far better than that at Boston.* Great reception. Great, "Carol" and "Trial," on the first night; still greater, "Copperfield" and

"Bob," on the second. Dolby sends you a few papers by this post. You will see from their tone what a success it is.

I cannot pay this letter, because I give it at the latest moment to the mail-officer, who is going on board the Cunard packet in charge of the mails, and who is staying in this house. We are now selling (at the hall) the tickets for the four readings of next week. At nine o'clock this morning there were two thousand people in waiting, and they had begun to assemble in the bitter cold as early as two o'clock. All night long Dolby and our man have been stamping tickets. (Immediately over my head, by the bye, and keeping me awake.) This hotel is quite as quiet as Mivart's, in Brook Street. It is not very much larger. There are American hotels close by with five hundred bedrooms, and I don't know how many boarders; but this is conducted on what is called "the European principle," and is an admirable mixture of a first-class French and English house. I keep a very smart carriage and pair; and if you were to behold me driving out, furred up to the moustache, with furs on the coach-boy and on the driver, and with an immense white, red, and yellow striped rug for a covering, you would suppose me to be of Hungarian or Polish nationality.

Will you report the success here to Mr. Forster with my love, and tell him he shall hear from me by next mail?

Dolby sends his kindest regards. He is just come in from our ticket sales, and has put such an immense untidy heap of paper money on the table that it looks like a family wash. He hardly ever dines, and is always tearing about at unreasonable hours. He works very hard.

My best love to your aunt (to whom I will write next), and to Katie, and to both the Charleys, and all the Christmas circle, not forgetting Chorley, to whom give my special remembrance. You may get this by Christmas Day. *We* shall have to keep it travelling from Boston here; for I read at Boston on the 23d and 24th, and here again on the 26th.

DLXXXIX. MISS HOGARTH

WESTMINSTER HOTEL, IRVING PLACE, NEW YORK CITY,
Monday, December 16, 1867.

We have been snowed up here, and the communication with Boston is still very much retarded. Thus we have received no

letters by the Cunard steamer that came in last Wednesday, and are in a grim state of mind on that subject.

Last night I was getting into bed just at twelve o'clock, when Dolby came to my door to inform me that the house was on fire (I had previously smelt fire for two hours). I got Scott up directly, told him to pack the books and clothes for the readings first, dressed, and pocketed my jewels and papers, while Dolby stuffed himself out with money. Meanwhile the police and firemen were in the house, endeavouring to find where the fire was. For some time it baffled their endeavours, but at last, bursting out through some stairs, they cut the stairs away, and traced it to its source in a certain fire-grate. By this time the hose was laid all through the house from a great tank on the roof, and everybody turned out to help. It was the oddest sight, and people had put the strangest things on! After a little chopping and cutting with axes and handing about of water, the fire was confined to a dining-room in which it had originated, and then everybody talked to everybody else, the ladies being particularly loquacious and cheerful. And so we got to bed again at about two.

The excitement of the readings continues unabated, the tickets for readings are sold as soon as they are ready, and the public pay treble prices to the speculators who buy them up. They are a wonderfully fine audience, even better than Edinburgh, and almost, if not quite, as good as Paris.

Dolby continues to be the most unpopular man in America (mainly because he can't get four thousand people into a room that holds two thousand), and is reviled in print daily. Yesterday morning a newspaper proclaims of him: "Surely it is time that the pudding-headed Dolby retired into the native gloom from which he has emerged." He takes it very coolly, and does his best. Mrs. Morgan sent me, the other night, I suppose the finest and costliest basket of flowers ever seen, made of white camellias, yellow roses, pink roses, and I don't know what else. It is a yard and a half round at its smallest part.

I must bring this to a close, as I have to go to the hall to try an enlarged background.

DXC. MISS HOGARTH

BOSTON, Sunday, December 22, 1867.

Coming here from New York last night (after a detestable journey), I was delighted to find your letter of the 6th. I read it at my ten o'clock dinner with the greatest interest and pleasure, and then we talked of home till we went to bed.

Our tour is now being made out, and I hope to be able to send it in my next letter home, which will be to Mamie, from whom I have *not* heard (as you thought I had) by the mail that brought out yours. After very careful consideration I have reversed Dolby's original plan, and have decided on taking Baltimore, Washington, Cincinnati, *Chicago* (!), St. Louis, and a few other places nearer here, instead of staying in New York. My reason is that we are doing immensely, both at New York and here, and that I am sure it is in the peculiar character of the people to prize a thing the more the less easily attainable it is made. Therefore, I want, by absence, to get the greatest rush and pressure upon the five farewell readings in New York in April. All our announced readings are already crammed.

When we got here last Saturday night, we found that Mrs. Fields had not only garnished the rooms with flowers, but also with holly (with real red berries) and festoons of moss dependent from the looking-glasses and picture frames. She is one of the dearest little women in the world. The homely Christmas look of the place quite affected us. Yesterday we dined at her house, and there was a plum-pudding, brought on blazing, and not to be surpassed in any house in England. There is a certain Captain Dolliver, belonging to the Boston Custom House, who came off in the little steamer that brought me ashore from the Cuba. He took it into his head that he would have a piece of English mistletoe brought out in this week's Cunard, which should be laid upon my breakfast-table. And there it was this morning. In such affectionate touches as this these New England people are especially amiable.

As a general rule, you may lay it down that whatever you see about me in the papers is not true. But although my voyage out was of that highly hilarious description that you first made known to me, you may *generally* lend a more believing ear to the Philadelphia correspondent of the "Times." I don't

know him, but I know the source from which he derives his information, and it is a very respectable one.

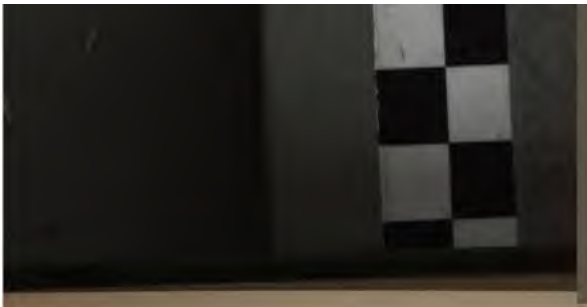
Did I tell you in a former letter from here to tell Anne, with her old master's love, that I had seen Putnam, my old secretary? Grey, and with several front teeth out, but I would have known him anywhere. He is coming to "Copperfield" to-night, accompanied by his wife and daughter, and is in the seventh heaven at having his tickets given him.

Our hotel in New York was on fire *again* the other night. But fires in this country are quite matters of course. There was a large one there at four this morning, and I don't think a single night has passed since I have been under the protection of the Eagle, but I have heard the fire bells dolefully clanging all over the city.

Dolby sends his kindest regard. His hair has become quite white, the effect, I suppose, of the climate. He is so universally hauled over the coals (for no reason on earth), that I fully expect to hear him, one of these nights, assailed with a howl when he precedes me to the platform steps. You may conceive what the low newspapers are here, when one of them yesterday morning had, as an item of news, the intelligence: "Dickens's Readings. The chap calling himself Dolby got drunk last night, and was locked up in a police-station for fighting an Irishman." I don't find that anybody is shocked by this liveliness.

My love to all, and to Mrs. Hulkes and the boy. By the bye, when we left New York for this place, Dolby called my amazed attention to the circumstance that Scott was leaning his head against the side of the carriage and weeping bitterly. I asked him what was the matter, and he replied: "The owdacious treatment of the luggage, which was more outrageous than a man could bear." I told him not to make a fool of himself; but they do knock it about cruelly. I think every trunk we have is already broken.

I must leave off, as I am going out for a walk in a bright sunlight and a complete break-up of the frost and snow. I am much better than I have been during the last week, but have a cold.



DXCI. JOHN FORSTER

BOSTON, December 22, 1867.

The railways are truly alarming. Much worse (because more worn, I suppose) than when I was here before. We were beaten about yesterday, as if we had been aboard the Cuba. Two rivers have to be crossed, and each time the whole train is banged aboard a big steamer. The steamer rises and falls with the river, which the railroad don't do; and the train is either banged up hill or banged down hill. In coming off the steamer at one of these crossings yesterday, we were banged up such a height that the rope broke, and one carriage rushed back with a run down hill into the boat again. I whisked out in a moment, and two or three others after me; but nobody else seemed to care about it. The treatment of the luggage is perfectly outrageous. Nearly every case I have is already broken. When we started for Boston yesterday, I beheld, to my unspeakable amazement, Scott, my dresser, leaning a flushed countenance against the wall of the car, and *weeping bitterly*. It was over my smashed writing-desk. Yet the arrangements for luggage are excellent, if the porters would not be beyond description reckless. . . . The halls are excellent. Imagine one holding two thousand people, seated with exact equality for every one of them, and every one seated separately. I have nowhere, at home or abroad, seen so fine a police as the police of New York; and their bearing in the streets is above all praise. On the other hand, the laws for regulation of public vehicles, clearing of streets, and removal of obstructions are wildly outraged by the people for whose benefit they are intended. Yet there is undoubtedly improvement in every direction, and I am taking time to make up my mind on things in general. Let me add that I have been tempted out at three in the morning to visit one of the large police station-houses, and was so fascinated by the study of a horrible photograph-book of thieves' portraits that I could n't shut it up.

DXCII. MISS DICKENS

WESTMINSTER HOTEL, IRVING PLACE, NEW YORK CITY,
Thursday, December 26, 1867.

I got your aunt's last letter at Boston yesterday, Christmas Day morning, when I was starting at eleven o'clock to come back to this place. I wanted it very much, for I had a frightful cold (English colds are nothing to those of this country), and was exceedingly depressed and miserable. Not that I had any reason but illness for being so, since the Bostonians had been quite astounding in their demonstrations. I never saw anything like them on Christmas Eve. But it is a bad country to be unwell and travelling in; you are one of say a hundred people in a heated car, with a great stove in it, and all the little windows closed, and the hurrying and banging about are indescribable. The atmosphere is detestable, and the motion often all but intolerable. However, we got our dinner here at eight o'clock, and plucked up a little, and I made some hot gin punch to drink a Merry Christmas to all at home in. But it must be confessed that we were both very dull. I have been in bed all day until two o'clock, and here I am now (at three o'clock) a little better. But I am not fit to read, and I must read to-night. After watching the general character pretty closely, I became quite sure that Dolby was wrong on the length of the stay and the number of readings we had proposed in this place. I am quite certain that it is one of the national peculiarities that what they want must be difficult of attainment. I therefore a few days ago made a *coup d'état*, and altered the whole scheme. We shall go to Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, also some New England towns between Boston and this place, away to the Falls of Niagara, and off far west to Chicago and St. Louis, before coming back for ten farewell readings here, preceded by farewells at Boston, leaving Canada altogether. This will not prolong the list beyond eighty-four readings, the exact original number, and will, please God, work it all out in April. In my next, I dare say, I shall be able to send the exact list, so that you may know every day where we are. There has been a great storm here for a few days, and the streets, though wet, are becoming passable again. Dolby and Osgood are out in it to-day on a variety

of business, and left in grave and solemn state. Scott and the gasman are stricken with dumb concern, not having received one single letter from home since they left. What their wives can have done with the letters they take it for granted they have written is their stormy speculation at the door of my hall dressing-room every night.

If I do not send a letter to Katie by this mail, it will be because I shall probably be obliged to go across the water to Brooklyn to-morrow to see a church, in which it is proposed that I shall read!!! Horrible visions of being put in the pulpit already beset me. And whether the audience will be in pews is another consideration which greatly disturbs my mind. No paper ever comes out without a leader on Dolby, who of course reads them all, and never can understand why I don't, in which he is called all the bad names in (and not in) the language.

We always call him P. H. Dolby now, in consequence of one of these graceful specimens of literature describing him as the "pudding-headed."

I fear that when we travel he will have to be always before me, so that I may not see him six times in as many weeks. However, I shall have done a fourth of the whole this very next week!

Best love to your aunt, and the boys, and Katie, and Charley, and all true friends.

Friday.

I managed to read last night, but it was as much as I could do. To-day I am so very unwell, that I have sent for a doctor; he has just been, and is in doubt whether I shall not have to stop reading for a while.

DXCIII. MISS DICKENS

Westminster Hotel, Irving Place, New York,
Monday, December 30, 1867.

I am getting all right again. I have not been well, been very low, and have been obliged to have a doctor; a very agreeable fellow *indeed, who soon* turned out to be an old friend of *Olliffe's.*[1] *He has set me* on my legs and taken his leave

[1] Dr. Fordyce Barker.

"professionally," though he means to give me a call now and then.

In the library at Gad's is a bound book, "Remarkable Criminal Trials," translated by Lady Duff Gordon, from the original by Feuerbach. I want that book, and a copy of Praed's poems, to be sent out to Boston, care of Ticknor and Fields. If you will give the "Criminal Trials" to Wills, and explain my wish, and ask him to buy a copy of Praed's poems and add it to the parcel, he will know how to send the packet out. I think the "Criminal Trials" book is in the corner book-case, by the window, opposite the door.

No news here. All going on in the regular way. I read in that church I told you of about the middle of January. It is wonderfully seated for two thousand people, and is as easy to speak in as if they were two hundred. The people are seated in pews, and we let the pews. I stood on a small platform from which the pulpit will be removed for the occasion!! I emerge from the vestry!!! Philadelphia, Baltimore, and another two nights in Boston will follow this coming month of January. On Friday next I shall have read a fourth of my

Christmas Day, and how you (as they say in this country) "got along." It is exceedingly cold here again, after two or three quite spring days.

DXCIV. JOHN FORSTER

NEW YORK, January 3, 1868.

We try to withhold the best seats from the speculators, but the unaccountable thing is that the great mass of the public buy of them (prefer it), and the rest of the public are injured if we have not got those very seats to sell them. We have now a travelling staff of six men, in spite of which Dolby, who is leaving me to-day to sell tickets in Philadelphia to-morrow morning, will no doubt get into a tempest of difficulties. Of course also, in such a matter, as many obstacles as possible are thrown in an Englishman's way; and he may himself be a little injudicious into the bargain. Last night, for instance, he met one of the "ushers" (who show people to their seats) coming in with one of our men. It is against orders that any one employed in front should go out during the reading, and he took this man to task in the British manner. Instantly, the free and independent usher put on his hat and walked off. Seeing which, all the other free and independent ushers (some 20 in number) put on *their* hats and walked off; leaving us absolutely devoid and destitute of a staff for to-night. One has since been improvised: but it was a small matter to raise a stir and ill will about, especially as one of our men was equally in fault; and really there is little to be done at night. American people are so accustomed to take care of themselves, that one of these immense audiences will fall into their places with an ease amazing to a frequenter of St. James's Hall; and the certainty with which they are all in, before I go on, is a very acceptable mark of respect. Our great labour is outside; and we have been obliged to bring our staff up to six, besides a boy or two, by employment of a regular additional clerk, a Bostonian. The speculators buying the front seats (we have found instances of this being done by merchants in good position), the public won't have the back seats; return their tickets; write and print volumes on the subject; and deter others from coming. You are not to suppose that this prevails to any great extent, as our lowest house here has been £300; but it does hit us. There

is no doubt about it. Fortunately I saw the danger when the trouble began, and changed the list at the right time. . . . You may get an idea of the staff's work, by what is in hand now. They are preparing, numbering, and stamping 6000 tickets for Philadelphia, and 8000 tickets for Brooklyn. The moment those are done, another 8000 tickets will be wanted for Baltimore, and probably another 6000 for Washington; and all this in addition to the correspondence, advertisements, accounts, travelling, and the nightly business of the readings four times a week. . . . I cannot get rid of this intolerable cold! My landlord invented for me a drink of brandy, rum, and snow, called it a "Rocky Mountain Sneezer," and said it was to put down all less effectual sneezing; but it has not yet had the effect. Did I tell you that the favourite drink before you get up is an Eye-Opener? There has been another fall of snow, succeeded by a heavy thaw.

DXCV. MISS HOGARTH

WESTMINSTER HOTEL, IRVING PLACE, NEW YORK,
Friday, January 3, 1868.

matter to raise a stir and ill will about, especially as one of our men was equally in fault.

We have a regular clerk, a Bostonian whose name is Wild. He, Osgood, Dolby, Kelly, Scott, George the gas-man, and perhaps a boy or two, constitute my body-guard. It seems a large number of people, but the business cannot be done with fewer. The speculators buying the front seats to sell at a premium (and we have found instances of this being done by merchants in good position!), and the public perpetually pitching into Dolby for selling them back seats, the result is that they won't have the back seats, send back their tickets, write and print volumes on the subject, and deter others from coming.

You may get an idea of the staff's work, by what is in hand now. They are preparing, numbering, and stamping six thousand tickets for Philadelphia, and eight thousand tickets for Brooklyn. The moment those are done, another eight thousand tickets will be wanted for Baltimore, and probably another six thousand for Washington. This in addition to the correspondence, advertisements, accounts, travellings, and the nightly business of the readings four times a week.

The Cunard steamers being now removed from Halifax, I have decided *not* to go there, or to St. John, New Brunswick. And as there would be a perfect uproar if I picked out such a place in Canada as Quebec or Montreal, and excluded those two places (which would guarantee three hundred pounds a night), and further, as I don't want places, having more than enough for my list of eighty-four, I have finally resolved not to go to Canada either. This will enable me to embark for home in April instead of May.

Tell Plorn, with my love, that I think he will find himself much interested at that college,[1] and that it is very likely he may make some acquaintances there that will thereafter be pleasant and useful to him. Sir Sydney Dacres is the best of friends. I have a letter from Mrs. Hulkes by this post, wherein the boy incloses a violet, now lying on the table before me. Let her know that it arrived safely, and retaining its colour. I took it for granted that Mary would have asked Chorley for Christmas Day, and am very glad she ultimately did so. I am sorry that Harry lost his prize, but believe it was not his fault. Let *him* know *that*, with my love. I would

[1] The Agricultural College, Cirencester.

have written to him by this mail in answer to his, but for other occupation. Did I tell you that my landlord made me a drink (brandy, rum, and snow the principal ingredients) called a "Rocky Mountain Sneezer"? Or that the favourite drink before you get up is an "eye-opener"? Or that Roberts (second landlord) no sooner saw me on the night of the first fire, than, with his property blazing, he insisted on taking me down into a roomful of hot smoke to drink brandy and water with him? We have not been on fire again, by the bye, more than once.

There has been another fall of snow, succeeded by a heavy thaw. I have laid down my sledge, and taken up my carriage again, in consequence. I am nearly all right, but cannot get rid of an intolerable cold in the head. No more news.

DXCVI. MISS HOGARTH

PARKER HOUSE, BOSTON, U. S., January 4, 1868.

I write to you by this opportunity, though I really have nothing to tell you. The work is hard and the climate is hard. We made a tremendous hit last night with "Nickleby"

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as yet make out is, that my perfect freedom from bondage, and at any moment to go on or leave off, or otherwise do as I like, is the only safe position to occupy.

Again; there are two apparently irreconcilable contrasts here. Down below in this hotel every night are the bar loungers, dram drinkers, drunkards, swaggerers, loafers, that one might find in a Boucicault play. Within half an hour is Cambridge, where a delightful domestic life — simple, self-respectful, cordial, and affectionate — is seen in an admirable aspect. All New England is primitive and puritanical. All about and around it is a puddle of mixed human mud, with no such quality in it. Perhaps I may in time sift out some tolerably intelligible whole, but I certainly have not done so yet. It is a good sign, may be, that it all seems immensely more difficult to understand than it was when I was here before.

Felton left two daughters. I have only seen the eldest, a very sensible, frank, pleasant girl of eight-and-twenty, perhaps, rather like him in the face. A striking-looking daughter of Hawthorne's (who is also dead) came into my room last night. The day has slipped on to three o'clock, and I must get up "Dombey" for to-night. Hence this sudden break off. Best love to Mamie, and to Katie and Charley Collins.

DXCVII. JOHN FORSTER

NEW YORK, January 9, 1868.

Each evening an enormous ferry-boat will convey me and my state-carriage (not to mention half a dozen wagons and any number of people and a few score of horses) across the river to Brooklyn, and will bring me back again. The sale of tickets there was an amazing scene. The noble army of speculators are now furnished (this is literally true, and I am quite serious) each man with a straw mattress, a little bag of bread and meat, two blankets, and a bottle of whiskey. With this outfit, *they lie down in line on the pavement* the whole of the night before the tickets are sold: generally taking up their position at about ten. It being severely cold at Brooklyn, they made an immense bonfire in the street — a narrow street of wooden houses — which the police turned out to extinguish. A general fight then took place; from which the people farthest off in the line rushed bleeding when they saw any chance of ousting others

nearer the door, put their mattresses in the spots so gained, and held on by the iron rails. At 8 in the morning Dolby appeared with the tickets in a portmanteau. He was immediately saluted with a roar of "Halloa! Dolby!" "So Charley has let you have the carriage, has he, Dolby?" "How is he, Dolby?" "Don't drop the tickets, Dolby!" "Look alive, Dolby!" etc., etc., etc., in the midst of which he proceeded to business, and concluded (as usual) by giving universal dissatisfaction. He is now going off upon a little journey to look over the ground and cut back again. This little journey (to Chicago) is twelve hundred miles on end, by railway, besides the back again!

DXCVIII. WILKIE COLLINS

Westminster Hotel, New York,
Sunday, January 12, 1868.

My dear Wilkie, — First, of the play.[1] I am truly delighted to learn that it made so great a success, and I hope I may yet see it on the Adelphi boards. You have had a world of trouble and work with it, but I hope will be repaid in some degree by the pleasure of a triumph. Even for the alteration

play it. Unto which he replied, that he meant to play it and would play it. Of course he knew very well that if an injunction were applied for against him, there would be an immediate howl against my persecution of an innocent, and he played it. Then the noble host of pirates rushed in, and it is being done, in some mangled form or other, everywhere.

It touches me to read what you write of your poor mother. But, of course, at her age, each winter counts heavily. Do give her my love, and tell her that I asked you about her.

I am going on here at the same great rate, but am always counting the days that lie between me and home. I got through the first fourth of my readings on Friday, January 3. I leave for two readings at Philadelphia this evening.

Being at Boston last Sunday, I took it into my head to go over the medical school, and survey the holes and corners in which that extraordinary murder was done by Webster. There was the furnace — stinking horribly, as if the dismembered pieces were still inside it — and there are all the grim spouts, and sinks, and chemical appliances, and what not. At dinner, afterwards, Longfellow told me a terrific story. He dined with Webster within a year of the murder, one of a party of ten or twelve. As they sat at their wine, Webster suddenly ordered the lights to be turned out, and a bowl of some burning mineral to be placed on the table, that the guests might see how ghostly it made them look. As each man stared at all the rest in the weird light, all were horrified to see Webster *with a rope round his neck*, holding it up, over the bowl, with his head jerked on one side, and his tongue lolled out, representing a man being hanged!

Poking into his life and character, I find (what I would have staked my head upon) that he was always a cruel man.

So no more at present from,

My dear Wilkie, yours ever affectionately.

DXCIX. MISS HOGARTH

WESTMINSTER HOTEL, NEW YORK,
Sunday, January 12, 1868.

As I am off to Philadelphia this evening, I may as well post my letter here. I have scarcely a word of news. My cold steadily refuses to leave me; but otherwise I am as right as

one can hope to be under this heavy work. My New York readings are over (except four farewell nights in April), and I look forward to the relief of being out of my hardest hall. Last Friday night, though it was only "Nickleby" and "Boots," I was again dead beat at the end, and was once more laid upon a sofa. But the faintness went off after a little while. We have now cold, bright, frosty weather, without snow — the best weather for me.

Having been in great trepidation about the play, I am correspondingly elated by the belief that it really *is* a success. No doubt the unnecessary explanations will have been taken out, and the flatness of the last act fetched up. At some points I could have done wonders to it, in the way of screwing it up sharply, and picturesquely, if I could have rehearsed it. Your account of the first night interested me immensely, but I was afraid to open the letter until Dolby rushed in with the opened "Times."

On Wednesday I come back here for my four church readings at Brooklyn. Each evening an enormous ferry-boat will convey me and my state-carriage (not to mention half a dozen wagons, and any number of people, and a few score of horses)

He is now going off upon a little journey "to look over the ground and cut back again." This little journey (to Chicago) is fifteen hundred miles on end, by railway, and back again!

We have an excellent gas-man, who is well up to that department. We have enlarged the large staff by another clerk; yet even now the preparation of such an immense number of new tickets constantly, and the keeping and checking of the accounts, keep them hard at it. And they get so oddly divided! Kelly is at Philadelphia, another man at Baltimore, two others are stamping tickets at the top of this house, another is cruising over New England, and Osgood will come on duty to-morrow (when Dolby starts off) to pick me up after the reading, and take me to the hotel, and mount guard over me, and bring me back here. You see that even such wretched domesticity as Dolby and self by a fireside is broken up under these conditions.

Dolby has been twice poisoned, and Osgood once. Morgan's sharpness has discovered the cause. When the snow is deep upon the ground, and the partridges cannot get their usual food, they eat something (I don't know what, if anybody does) which does not poison *them*, but which poisons the people who eat them. The symptoms, which last some twelve hours, are violent sickness, cold perspiration, and the formation of some detestable mucus in the stomach. You may infer that partridges have been banished from our bill of fare. The appearance of our sufferers was lamentable in the extreme.

Did I tell you that the severity of the weather and the heat of the intolerable furnaces dry the hair and break the nails of strangers? There is not a complete nail in the whole British suite, and my hair cracks again when I brush it. (I am losing my hair with great rapidity, and what I don't lose is getting very grey.)

The Cuba will bring this. She has a jolly new captain — Moody, of the Java — and her people rushed into the reading, the other night, captain-headed, as if I were their peculiar property. Please God, I shall come home in her, in my old cabin; leaving here on the 22d of April, and finishing my eighty-fourth reading on the previous night! It is likely enough that I shall read and go straight on board.

I think this is all my poor stock of intelligence. By the bye, on the last Sunday in the old year, I lost my old year's

pocket-book, "which," as Mr. Pepys would add, "do trouble me mightily." Give me Katie's new address; I have not got it.

DC. MISS DICKENS

PHILADELPHIA, Monday, January 13, 1868.

I write you this note, a day later than your aunt's, not because I have anything to add to the little I have told her, but because you may like to have it.

We arrived here last night towards twelve o'clock, more than an hour after our time. This is one of the immense American hotels (it is called the Continental); but I find myself just as quiet here as elsewhere. Everything is very good indeed, the waiter is German, and the greater part of the house servants seem to be coloured people. The town is very clean, and the day as blue and bright as a fine Italian day. But it freezes very hard. All the tickets being sold here for six nights (three visits of two nights each), the suite complain of want of excitement already, having been here ten hours! Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams, with a couple of servants, and a pretty little child-daughter, were in the train each night, and I talked with them a good deal. They are reported to have made an enormous fortune by acting among the Californian gold-diggers. My cold is no better, for the cars are so intolerably hot that I was often obliged to go and stand upon the brake outside, and then the frosty air was biting indeed. The great man of this place is one Mr. Childs, a newspaper proprietor, and he is so exactly like Mr. Esse in all conceivable respects except being an inch or so taller, that I was quite confounded when I saw him waiting for me at the station (always called depôt here) with his carriage. During the last two or three days, Dolby and I have been making up accounts, which are excellently kept by Mr. Osgood, and I find them amazing, quite, in their results.

I was very much interested in the home accounts of Christmas Day. I think I have already mentioned that we were in very low spirits on that day. I began to be unwell with my cold that morning, and a long day's travel did not mend the matter. We scarcely spoke (except when we ate our lunch), and sat dolefully staring out of window. I had a few affectionate words from Chorley, dated from my room, on Christmas morning, and will write him, probably by this mail, a brief

acknowledgment. I find it necessary (so oppressed am I with this American catarrh, as they call it) to dine at three o'clock instead of four, that I may have more time to get voice, so that the days are cut short, and letter-writing is not easy.

My best love to Katie, and to Charley, and to our Charley, and to all friends. If I could only get to the point of being able to hold my head up and dispense with my pocket-handkerchief for five minutes, I should be all right.

DCI. CHARLES DICKENS, JR.

WESTMINSTER HOTEL, IRVING PLACE, NEW YORK,
Wednesday, January 15, 1868.

MY DEAR CHARLEY, — Finding your letter here this afternoon on my return from Philadelphia (where I have been reading two nights), I take advantage of a spare half hour in which to answer it at once, though it will not leave here until Saturday. I had previously heard of the play, and had "The Times." It was a great relief and delight to me, for I had no confidence in its success, being reduced to the confines of despair by its length. If I could have rehearsed it, I should have taken the best part of an hour out of it. Fechter must be very fine, and I should greatly like to see him play the part.

I have not been very well generally, and am oppressed (and I begin to think that I probably shall be until I leave) by a true American cold, which I hope, for the comfort of human nature, may be peculiar to only one of the four quarters of the world. The work, too, is very severe. But I am going on at the same tremendous rate everywhere. The staff, too, has had to be enlarged. Dolby was at Baltimore yesterday, is at Washington to-day, and will come back in the night, and start away again on Friday. We find it absolutely necessary for him to go on ahead. We have not printed or posted a single bill here, and have just sold ninety pounds' worth of paper we had got ready for bills. In such a rush a short newspaper advertisement is all we want. "Doctor Marigold" made a great hit here, and is looked forward to at Boston with especial interest. I go to Boston for another fortnight, on end, the 24th of February. The railway *journeys* distress me greatly. I get out into *the open air (upon the* brake), and it snows and blows, and *the train bumps, and the* steam flies at me, until I am driven in *again.*

I have finished here (except four farewell nights in April), and begin four nights at Brooklyn, on the opposite side of the river, to-night; and thus oscillate between Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, and then cut into New England, and so work my way back to Boston for a fortnight, after which come Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, and Cleveland and Buffalo, and then Philadelphia, Boston, and New York farewells. I will not pass my original bound of eighty-four readings in all. My mind was made up as to that long ago. It will be quite enough. Chicago is some fifteen hundred miles from here. What with travelling, and getting ready for reading, and reading, the days are pretty fully occupied. Not the less so because I rest very indifferently at night.

The people are exceedingly kind and considerate, and desire to be most hospitable besides. But I cannot accept hospitality, and never go out, except at Boston, or I should not be fit for the labour. If Dolby holds out well to the last it will be a triumph, for he has to see everybody, drink with everybody, sell all the tickets, take all the blame, and go beforehand to all the places on the list. I shall not see him after to-night for ten days or a fortnight, and he will be perpetually on the road during the interval. When he leaves me, Osgood, a partner in Ticknor and Fields' publishing firm, mounts guard over me, and has to go into the hall from the platform door every night, and see how the public are seating themselves. It is very odd to see how hard he finds it to look a couple of thousand people in the face, on which head, by the bye, I notice the papers to take "Mr. Dickens's extraordinary composure" (their great phrase) rather ill, and on the whole to imply that it would be taken as a suitable compliment if I would stagger on to the platform and instantly drop, overpowered by the spectacle before me.

Dinner is announced (by Scott, with a stiff neck and a sore throat), and I must break off with love to Bessie and the incipient Wenerablesses. You will be glad to hear of your distinguished parent that Philadelphia has discovered that "he is not like the descriptions we have read of him at the little red desk. He is not at all foppish in appearance. He wears a heavy moustache and a Vandyke beard, and looks like a well-to-do Philadelphia gentleman."

Ever, my dear Charley, your affectionate father.

P. S. — Your paper is remarkably good. There is not the least doubt that you can write constantly for "A. Y. R." I am very pleased with it.

DCII. MISS DICKENS

WESTMINSTER HOTEL, NEW YORK,
Friday, January 18, 1868.

This will be but a very short report, as I must get out for a little exercise before dinner.

My "true American catarrh" (the people seem to have a national pride in it) sticks to me, but I am otherwise well. I began my church readings last night, and it was very odd to see the pews crammed full of people, all in a broad roar at the "Carol" and "Trial."

Best love to all. I have written Charley a few lines by this mail, and also Chorley.

DCIII. MISS HOGARTH

WESTMINSTER HOTEL, NEW YORK,
Tuesday, January 21, 1868.

I finished my church to-night. It is Mrs. Stowe's brother's, and a most wonderful place to speak in. We had it enormously full last night ("Marigold" and "Trial"), but it scarcely required an effort. Mr. Ward Beecher (Mrs. Stowe's brother's name) being present in his pew, I sent to invite him to come round before he left; and I found him to be an unostentatious, straightforward, and agreeable fellow.

My cold sticks to me, and I can scarcely exaggerate what I sometimes undergo from sleeplessness. The day before yesterday I could get no rest until morning, and could not get up before twelve. This morning the same. I rarely take any breakfast but an egg and a cup of tea, not even toast or bread and butter. My dinner at three, and a little quail or some such light thing when I come home at night, is my daily fare. At the Hall I have established the custom of taking an egg beaten up in sherry before going in, and another between the parts. I think that pulls me up; at all events, I have since had no return of faintness.

As the men work very hard, and always with their hearts

cheerfully in the business, I cram them into and outside of the carriage, to bring them back from Brooklyn with me. The other night, Scott (with a portmanteau across his knees and a wide-awake hat low down upon his nose) told me that he had presented himself for admission in the circus (as good as Franconi's, by the bye), and had been refused. "The only theayter," he said in a melancholy way, "as I was ever in my life turned from the door of." Says Kelly: "There must have been some mistake, Scott, because George and me went, and we said, 'Mr. Dickens's staff,' and they passed us to the best seats in the house. Go again, Scott." "No, I thank you, Kelly," says Scott, more melancholy than before, "I'm not a going to put myself in the position of being refused again. It's the only theayter as I was ever turned from the door of, and it sha'n't be done twice. But it's a beastly country!" "Scott," interposed Majesty, "don't you express your opinions about the country." "No, sir," says Scott, "I never do, please, sir, but when you are turned from the door of the only theayter you was ever turned from, sir, and when the beasts in railway cars spits tobacco over your boots, you (privately) find yourself in a beastly country."

I expect shortly to get myself snowed up on some railway or other, for it is snowing hard now, and I begin to move tomorrow. There is so much floating ice in the river that we are obliged to leave a pretty wide margin of time for getting over the ferry to read. The dinner is coming in, and I must leave off.

DCIV. MISS DICKENS

PHILADELPHIA, Thursday, January 23, 1868.

When I wrote to your aunt by the last mail, I accidentally omitted to touch upon the question of helping Anne. So I will begin in this present writing with reference to her sad position. I think it will be best for you to be guided by an exact knowledge of her *wants*. Try to ascertain from herself what means she has, whether her sick husband gets what he ought to have, whether she is pinched in the articles of necessary clothing, bedding, or the like of that; add to this intelligence your own observation of the state of things about her, and supply what she most wants, and help her where you find the greatest need. The question, in the case of so old and faithful a servant, is not

me of so much or so little money on my side, but how *most efficiently* to ease her mind and help *her*. To do this at once kindly and sensibly is the only consideration by which you have to be guided. Take *carte blanche* from me for all the rest.

My Washington week is the first week in February, beginning on Monday, 3d. The tickets are sold, and the President is coming, and the chief members of the Cabinet, and the leaders of parties, and so forth, are coming; and, as the Holly-Tree Boots says: "That 's where it is, don't you see!"

In my Washington doubts I recalled Dolby for conference, and he joined me yesterday afternoon, and we have been in great discussion ever since on the possibility of giving up the Far West, and avoiding such immense distances and fatigues as would be involved in travelling to Chicago and Cincinnati. We have sketched another tour for the last half of March, which would be infinitely easier for me, though on the other hand less profitable, the places and the halls being smaller. The worst of it is, that everybody one advises with has a monomania respecting Chicago. "Good heaven, sir," the great Philadelphian authority said to me this morning, "if you don't read in Chicago, the people will go into fits." In reference to fatigue, I answered: "Well, I would rather they went into fits than I did." But he did n't seem to see it at all. —— alone constantly writes me: "Don't go to the West; you can get what you want so much more easily." How we shall finally decide, I don't yet know. My Brooklyn church has been an immense success, and I found its minister was a bachelor, a clever, unparsonic, and straightforward man, and a man with a good knowledge of art into the bargain.

We are not a bit too soon here, for the whole country is beginning to be stirred and shaken by the presidential election, and trade is exceedingly depressed, and will be more so. Fanny Kemble lives near this place, but had gone away a day before my first visit here. *She* is going to read in February or March. Du Chaillu has been lecturing out West about the gorilla, and has been to see me; I saw the Cunard steamer Persia out in the stream, yesterday, beautifully smart, her flags flying, all her steam up, and she only waiting for her mails to slip away. She gave me a horrible touch of home-sickness.

When the 1st of March arrives, and I can say "next month,"

I shall begin to grow brighter. A fortnight's reading in Boston too (last week of February and first week of March), will [illegible] me on gaily, I hope (the work so far off tells). It is impossible for two people to be more affectionately attached to a third, I really believe, than Fields and his wife are to me; and they are a landmark in the prospect.

Dolby sends kindest regards, and wishes it to be known that he has not been bullied lately. We do *not* go West at all, but take the easier plan.

DCV. MISS HOGARTH

BALTIMORE, Wednesday, January 28, 1868.

As I have an hour to spare, before starting to Philadelphia, I begin my letter this morning. It has been snowing hard for four-and-twenty hours, though this place is as far south as Valentia in Spain; and Dolby, being on his way to New York, has a good chance of being snowed up somewhere.

They are a bright, responsive people here, and very pleasant to read to. I have rarely seen so many fine faces in an audience. I read here in a charming little opera-house built by a society of Germans, quite a delightful place for the purpose. I stand on the stage, with a drop-curtain down, and my screen before it. The whole scene is very pretty and complete, and the audience have a "ring" in them that sounds in the ear. I go from here to Philadelphia to read to-morrow night and Friday, come through here again on Saturday on my way to Washington, come back here on Saturday week for two finishing nights, then go to Philadelphia for two farewells, and so turn my back on the southern part of the country. Distances and travelling have obliged us to reduce the list of readings by two, leaving eighty-two in all. Of course we afterwards discovered that we had finally settled the list on a Friday! I shall be halfway through it at Washington, of course, on a Friday also, and my birthday!

Dolby and Osgood, who do the most ridiculous things to keep me in spirits (I am often very heavy, and rarely sleep much), have decided to have a walking-match at Boston, on Saturday, February 29th. Beginning this design in joke, they have become tremendously in earnest, and Dolby has actually sent home (much to his opponent's terror) for a pair of seamless

socks to walk in. Our men are hugely excited on the subject, and continually make bets on "the men." Fields and I are to walk out six miles, and "the men" are to turn and walk round us. Neither of them has the least idea what twelve miles at a pace is. Being requested by both to give them "a breather" yesterday, I gave them a stiff one of five miles over a bad road in the snow, half the distance up hill. I took them at a pace of four miles and a half an hour, and you never beheld such objects as they were when we got back; both smoking like factories, and both obliged to change everything before they could come to dinner. They have the absurdest ideas of what are tests of walking power, and continually get up in the maddest manner and see *how high they can kick* the wall! The wainscot here, in one place, is scored all over with their pencil-marks. To see them doing this — Dolby, a big man, and Osgood, a very little one — is ridiculous beyond description.

PHILADELPHIA, Same Night.

We came on here through a snow-storm all the way, but up to time. Fanny Kemble (who begins to read shortly) is coming to "Marigold" and "Trial" to-morrow night. I have written her a note, telling her that if it will at all assist *her* movements to know *mine*, my list is at her service. Probably I shall see her to-morrow. Tell Mamie (to whom I will write next), with my love, that I found her letter of the 10th of this month awaiting me here. The Siberia that brought it, is a new Cunarder, and made an unusually slow passage out. Probably because it would be dangerous to work new machinery too fast on the Atlantic.

Thursday 30th.

My cold still sticks to me. The heat of the railway cars and their unventilated condition invariably brings it back when I think it going. This morning my head is as stuffed and heavy as ever! A superb sledge and four horses have been offered me for a ride, but I am afraid to take it, lest I should make the "true American catarrh" worse, and should get hoarse. So I am going to give Osgood another "breather" on foot instead.

The communication with New York is not interrupted, so we consider the zealous Dolby all right. You may imagine what his work is, when you hear that he goes three times to every

place we visit. Firstly, to look at the hall, arrange the ... berings, and make five hundred acquaintances, whom he ... diately calls by their Christian names; secondly, to sell ... tickets — a very nice business, requiring great tact and tem... thirdly, with me. He will probably turn up at Washing... next Sunday, but only for a little while; for as soon as I ... on the platform on Monday night, he will start away ag... probably to be seen no more until we pass through New Y... in the middle of February.

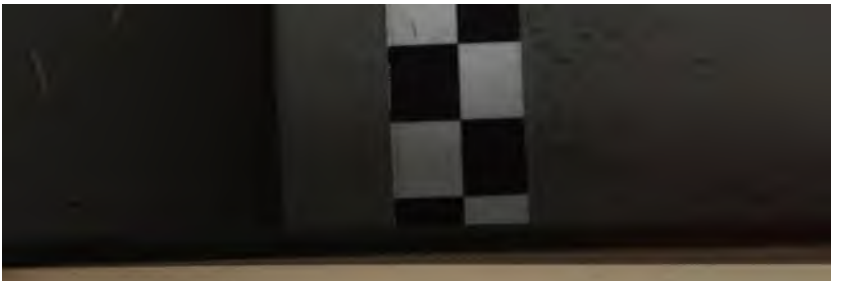
DCVI. SAMUEL CARTWRIGHT

BALTIMORE, Wednesday, January 29, 1868.

MY DEAR CARTWRIGHT, — As I promised to report myself to you from this side of the Atlantic, and as I have some leisure this morning, I am going to lighten my conscience by keeping my word.

I am going on at a great pace and with immense success. Next week, at Washington, I shall, please God, have got through half my readings. The remaining half are all arranged, and they will carry me into the third week of April. It is very hard work, but it is brilliantly paid. The changes that I find in the country generally (this place is the least changed of any I have yet seen) exceed my utmost expectations. I had been in New York a couple of days before I began to recognise it at all; and the handsomest part of Boston was a black swamp when I saw it five-and-twenty years ago. Considerable advances too, have been made socially. Strange to say, the railways and railway arrangements (both exceedingly defective) seem to have stood still while all the other things have been moving.

One of the most comical spectacles I have ever seen in my life was "church," with a heavy sea on, in the saloon of the Cunard steamer coming out. The officiating minister, an extremely modest young man, was brought in between two big stewards, exactly as if he were coming up to the scratch in a prize-fight. The ship was rolling and pitching so, that the two big stewards had to stop and watch their opportunity of making a dart at the reading-desk with their reverend charge, during which pause he held on, now by one steward and now by the other, with the feeblest expression of countenance and no legs



whatever. At length they made a dart at the wrong moment, and one steward was immediately beheld alone in the extreme perspective, while the other and the reverend gentleman *held on by the mast* in the middle of the saloon — which the latter embraced with both arms, as if it were his wife. All this time the congregation was breaking up into sects and sliding away; every sect (as in nature) pounding the other sect. And when at last the reverend gentleman had been tumbled into his place, the desk (a loose one, put upon the dining-table) deserted from the church bodily, and went over to the purser. The scene was so extraordinarily ridiculous, and was made so much more so by the exemplary gravity of all concerned in it, that I was obliged to leave before the service began.

This is one of the places where Butler carried it with so high a hand in the war, and where the ladies used to spit when they passed a Northern soldier. It still wears, I fancy, a look of sullen remembrance. (The ladies are remarkably handsome, with an Eastern look upon them, dress with a strong sense of colour, and make a brilliant audience.) The ghost of slavery haunts the houses; and the old, untidy, incapable, lounging, shambling black serves you as a free man. Free of course he ought to be; but the stupendous absurdity of making him a voter glares out of every roll of his eye, stretch of his mouth, and bump of his head. I have a strong impression that the race must fade out of the States very fast. It never can hold its own against a striving, restless, shifty people. In the penitentiary here, the other day, in a room full of all blacks (too dull to be taught any of the work in hand), was one young brooding fellow, very like a black rhinoceros. He sat glowering at life, as if it were just endurable at dinner-time, until four of his fellows began to sing, most unmelodiously, a part song. He then set up a dismal howl, and pounded his face on a form. I took him to have been rendered quite desperate by having learnt anything. I send my kind regard to Mrs. Cartwright, and sincerely hope that she and you have no new family distresses or anxieties. My standing address is the Westminster Hotel, Irving Place, New York City.

And I am always, my dear Cartwright,

Cordially yours.

DCVII. MISS DICKENS

PHILADELPHIA, Friday, January 31, 1868.

Since writing to your aunt I have received yours of the 7th, and am truly glad to have the last news of you confirmed by yourself.

From a letter Wilkie has written to me, it seems there can be no doubt that the "No Thoroughfare" drama is a real, genuine, and great success. It is drawing immensely, and seems to "go" with great effect and applause.

"Doctor Marigold" here last night (for the first time) was an immense success, and all Philadelphia is going to rush at once for tickets for the two Philadelphian farewells the week after next. The tickets are to be sold to-morrow, and great excitement is anticipated in the streets. Dolby not being here, a clerk will sell, and will probably wish himself dead before he has done with it.

It appears to me that Chorley writes to you on the legacy question because he wishes you to understand that there is no danger of his changing his mind, and at the bottom I descry an honest desire to pledge himself as strongly as possible. You may receive it in that better spirit, or I am much mistaken. Tell your aunt, with my best love, that I wrote to Chauncey weeks ago, in answer to a letter from him. I am now going out in a sleigh (and four) with unconceivable dignity and grandeur; mentioning which reminds me that I am informed by trusty scouts that —— intends to waylay me at Washington, and may even descend upon me in the train to-morrow.

Best love to Katie, the two Charleys, and all.

DCVIII. THE SAME

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, February 4, 1868.

I began here last night with great success. The hall being small, the prices were raised to three dollars each ticket. The audience was a superior one, composed of the foremost public men and their families. At the end of the "Carol" they gave a great break out, and applauded, I really believe, for five minutes. You would suppose them to be Manchester shillings instead of Washington half-sovereigns. Immense enthusiasm.

A devoted adherent in this place (an Englishman) had represented to Dolby that if I were taken to an hotel here it would be impossible to secure me a minute's rest, and he undertook to get one Wheleker, a German, who keeps a little Vérey's, to furnish his private dining-rooms for the illustrious traveller's reception. Accordingly here we are, on the first and second floor of a small house, with no one else in it but our people, a French waiter, and a very good French cuisine. Perfectly private, in the city of all the world (I should say) where the hotels are intolerable, and privacy the least possible, and quite comfortable. "Wheleker's Restaurant" is our rather undignified address for the present week.

I dined (against my rules) with Charles Sumner on Sunday, he having been an old friend of mine. Mr. Secretary Stanton (War Minister) was there. He is a man of a very remarkable memory, and famous for his acquaintance with the minutest details of my books. Give him any passage anywhere, and he will instantly cap it and go on with the context. He was commander-in-chief of all the Northern forces concentrated here, and never went to sleep at night without first reading something from my books, which were always with him. I put him through a pretty severe examination, but he was better up than I was.

The gas was very defective indeed last night, and I began with a small speech, to the effect that I must trust to the brightness of their faces for the illumination of mine; this was taken greatly. In the "Carol," a most ridiculous incident occurred all of a sudden. I saw a dog look out from among the seats into the centre aisle, and look very intently at me. The general attention being fixed on me, I don't think anybody saw the dog; but I felt so sure of his turning up again and barking, that I kept my eye wandering about in search of him. He was a very comic dog, and it was well for me that I was reading a very comic part of the book. But when he bounced out into the centre aisle again, in an entirely new place (still looking intently at me), and tried the effect of a bark upon my proceedings, I was seized with such a paroxysm of laughter, that it communicated itself to the audience, and we roared at one another loud *and long.*

The President has sent to me twice, and I am going to see *him to-morrow.* He has a whole row for his family every

night. Dolby rejoined his chief yesterday morning, and will probably remain in the august presence until Sunday night. He and Osgood, "training for the match," are ludicrous beyond belief. I saw them just now coming up a street, each trying to pass the other, and immediately fled. Since I have been writing this, they have burst in at the door and sat down on the floor to blow. Dolby is now writing at a neighbouring table, with his bald head smoking as if he were on fire. Kelly (his great adherent) asked me, when he was last away, whether it was quite fair that I should take Mr. Osgood out for "breathers" when Mr. Dolby had no such advantage. I begin to expect that half Boston will turn out on the 29th to see the match. In which case it will be unspeakably droll.

DCIX. JOHN FORSTER

WASHINGTON, February 4, 1868.

You may like to have a line to let you know that it is all right here, and that the croakers were simply ridiculous. I began last night. A charming audience, no dissatisfaction whatever at the raised prices, nothing missed or lost, cheers at the end of the "Carol," and rounds upon rounds of applause all through. All the foremost men and their families had taken tickets for the series of four. A small place to read in. £300 in it. . . . I am going to-morrow to see the President, who has sent to me twice. I dined with Charles Sumner last Sunday, against my rule; and as I had stipulated for no party, Mr. Secretary Stanton was the only other guest, besides his own secretary. Stanton is a man with a very remarkable memory, and extraordinarily familiar with my books. . . . He and Sumner having been the first two public men at the dying President's bedside, and having remained with him until he breathed his last, we fell into a very interesting conversation after dinner, when, each of them giving his own narrative separately, the usual discrepancies about details of time were observable. Then Mr. Stanton told me a curious little story which will form the remainder of this short letter.

On the afternoon of the day on which the President was shot, there was a cabinet council at which he presided. Mr. Stanton, being at the time commander-in-chief of the Northern troops that were concentrated about here, arrived rather late. Indeed,

they were waiting for him, and on his entering the room, the President broke off in something he was saying, and remarked: "Let us proceed to business, gentlemen." Mr. Stanton then noticed, with great surprise, that the President sat with an air of dignity in his chair instead of lolling about it in the most ungainly attitudes, as his invariable custom was; and that instead of telling irrelevant or questionable stories, he was grave and calm, and quite a different man. Mr. Stanton, on leaving the council with the Attorney General, said to him, "That is the most satisfactory cabinet meeting I have attended for many a long day! What an extraordinary change in Mr. Lincoln!" The Attorney General replied, "We all saw it, before you came in. While we were waiting for you, he said, with his chin down on his breast, 'Gentlemen, something very extraordinary is going to happen, and that very soon.'" To which the Attorney General had observed, "Something good, sir, I hope?" when the President answered very gravely: "I don't know; I don't know. But it will happen, and shortly too!" As they were all impressed by his manner, the Attorney General took him up again: "Have you received any information, sir, not yet disclosed to us?" "No," answered the President; "but I have had a dream. And I have now had the same dream three times. Once, on the night preceding the Battle of Bull Run. Once, on the night preceding," such another (naming a battle also not favourable to the North). His chin sank on his breast again, and he sat reflecting. "Might one ask the nature of this dream, sir?" said the Attorney General. "Well," replied the President, without lifting his head or changing his attitude, "I am on a great broad rolling river — and I am in a boat — and I drift — and I drift! — But this is not business" — suddenly raising his face and looking round the table as Mr. Stanton entered, — "let us proceed to business, gentlemen." Mr. Stanton and the Attorney General said, as they walked on together, it would be curious to notice whether anything ensued on this; and they agreed to notice. He was shot that night.

DCX. CHARLES LANMAN

WASHINGTON, February 5, 1868.

MY DEAR SIR, — Allow me to thank you most cordially for your kind letter, and for its accompanying books. I have a

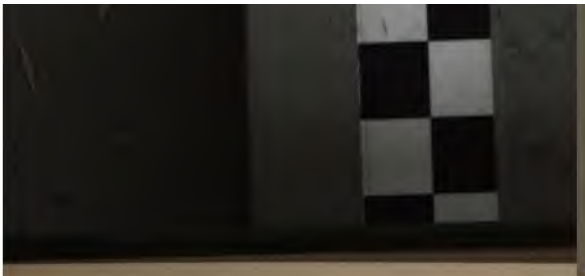
particular love for books of travel, and shall wander into the "Wilds of America" with great interest. I have also received your charming sketch with great pleasure and admiration. Let me thank you for it heartily. As a beautiful suggestion of nature associated with this country, it shall have a quiet place on the walls of my house as long as I live.

Your reference to my dear friend Washington Irving renews the vivid impressions reawakened in my mind at Baltimore the other day. I saw his fine face for the last time in that city. He came there from New York to pass a day or two with me before I went westwards, and they were made among the most memorable of my life by his delightful fancy and genial humour. Some unknown admirer of his books and mine sent to the hotel a most enormous mint-julep, wreathed with flowers. We sat, one on either side of it, with great solemnity (it filled a respectable-sized paper), but the solemnity was of very short duration. It was quite an enchanted julep, and carried us among innumerable people and places that we both knew. The julep held out far into the night, and my memory never saw him afterward otherwise than as bending over it, with his straw, with an attempted gravity (after some anecdote, involving some wonderfully droll and delicate observation of character), and then, as his eyes caught mine, melting into that captivating laugh of his which was the brightest and best I have ever heard. Dear Sir, with many thanks, faithfully yours.

DCXI. CHARLES LANMAN

WASHINGTON, February 7, 1868.

This scrambling scribblement is resumed this morning, because I have just seen the President, who had sent to me very courteously asking me to make my own appointment. He is a man with a remarkable face, indicating courage, watchfulness, and certainly strength of purpose. It is a face of the Webster type, but without the "bounce" of Webster's face. I would have picked him out anywhere as a character of mark. Figure, rather stoutish for an American; a trifle under the middle size; hands clasped in front of him; manner, suppressed, guarded, anxious. Each of us looked at the other very hard. . . . It was in his own cabinet that I saw him. As I came away, Thornton drove up in a sleigh — turned out for a state occasion — to deliver



his credentials. There was to be a cabinet council at twelve. The room was very like a London club's ante-drawing-room. On the walls, two engravings only: one, of his own portrait; one, of Lincoln's. . . . In the outer room was sitting a certain sunburnt General Blair, with many evidences of the war upon him. He got up to shake hands with me, and then I found that he had been out on the prairie with me five-and-twenty years ago. . . . The papers having referred to my birthday's falling to-day, my room is filled with most exquisite flowers. They came pouring in from all sorts of people at breakfast-time. The audiences here are really very fine. So ready to laugh or cry, and doing both so freely, that you would suppose them to be Manchester shillings rather than Washington half-sovereigns. Alas! alas! my cold worse than ever.

DCXII. MISS HOGARTH

WASHINGTON, my Birthday, 1868.
(And my cold worse than ever.)

This will be but a short letter, as I have been to see the President this morning, and have little time before the post goes. He had sent a gentleman to me, most courteously begging me to make my own appointment, and I did so. A man of very remarkable appearance indeed, of tremendous firmness of purpose. Not to be turned or trifled with.

As I mention my cold's being so bad, I will add that I have never had anything the matter with me since I came here *but* the cold. It is now in my throat, and slightly on my chest. It occasions me great discomfort, and you would suppose, seeing me in the morning, that I could not possibly read at night. But I have always come up to the scratch, have not yet missed one night, and have gradually got used to that. I had got much the better of it, but the dressing-room at the hall here is singularly cold and draughty, and so I have slid back again.

The papers here having written about this being my birthday, the most exquisite flowers came pouring in at breakfast-time from all *sorts of people*. The room is covered with them, *made up into beautiful* bouquets, and arranged in all manner of *green baskets*. *Probably* I shall find plenty more at the hall *to-night*. *This is considered* the dullest and most apathetic *place in America*. *My* audiences have been superb.

ned the dog on the first night here. Next night I thought I heard (in "Copperfield") a suddenly suppressed bark. It happened in this wise: Osgood, standing just within the door, felt his leg touched, and looking down beheld the dog staring intently at me, and evidently just about to bark. In a transport of presence of mind and fury, he instantly caught him up in both hands and threw him over his own head out into the entry, where the check-takers received him like a game at ball. Last night he came again *with another dog;* but our people were so sharply on the lookout for him that he did n't get in. He had evidently promised to pass the other dog free.

DCXIII. MISS DICKENS

BALTIMORE, U. S., Tuesday, February 11, 1868.

The weather has been desperately severe, and my cold quite as bad as ever. I could n't help laughing at myself on my birthday at Washington. It was observed as much as though I were a little boy. Flowers and garlands (of the most exquisite kind) bloomed all over the room; letters radiant with good wishes poured in; a shirt-pin, a handsome silver travelling-bottle, a set of gold shirt-studs, and a set of gold sleeve-links were on the dinner-table. After "Boots," at night, the whole audience rose and remained (Secretaries of State, President's family, Judges of Supreme Court, and so forth) standing and cheering until I went back to the table and made them a little speech. On the same august day of the year I was received by the President, a man with a very remarkable and determined face. Each of us looked at each other very hard, and each of us managed the interview (I think) to the satisfaction of the other. In the outer room was sitting a certain sunburnt General Blair, with many evidences of the war upon him. He got up to shake hands with me, and then I found he had been out in the prairie with me five-and-twenty years ago. That afternoon my "catarrh" was in such a state that Charles Sumner, coming in at five o'clock and finding me covered with mustard poultice, and apparently voiceless, turned to Dolby and said, "Surely, Mr. Dolby, it is impossible that he can read to-night." Says Dolby, "Sir, I have told the dear Chief so four times to-day, and I have been very anxious. But you have no idea how he will change when he gets to the little

table." After five minutes of the little table I was not (for the time) even hoarse. The frequent experience of this return of force when it is wanted saves me a vast amount of anxiety.

I wish you would get from Homan and report to me, as near as he can make, an approximate estimate is the right term in the trade, I believe, of the following work : —

1. To re-cover, with red leather, all the dining-room chairs.

2. To ditto, with green leather, all the library chairs and the couch.

3. To provide and lay down new *Brussels* carpets in the front spare and the two top spares. Quality of carpet, quality of yours and mine.

I have some doubts about the state of the hall floor-cloth, and also the floor-cloth in the dining-room. Will you and your aunt carefully examine both (calling in Homan too, if necessary), *and report to me?*

It would seem that "No Thoroughfare" has really developed as a drama into an amazing success. I begin to think that I shall see it. Dolby is away this morning, to conquer or die in a terrific struggle with the Mayor of New Haven (where I am to read next week), who has assailed him on a charge of false play in selling tickets. Osgood, my other keeper, stands at the table to take me out, and have a "breather" for the walking-match, so I must leave off.

Think of my dreaming of Mrs. Bouncer each night ! ! !

DCXIV. HENRY FIELDING DICKENS

BALTIMORE, U. S., Tuesday, February 11, 1868.

MY DEAR HARRY, — I should have written to you before now but for constant and arduous occupation.

In reference to the cricket club's not being what it might be, I agree with you in the main. There are some things to be considered, however, which you have hardly taken into account. The first thing to be avoided is, the slightest appearance of patronage (one of the curses of England). The second thing to be avoided is, the deprival of the men of their just right to manage their own affairs. I would rather have no club at all than have either of these great mistakes made. The way out of them is this: Call the men together, and explain to them that the club might be larger, richer, and better. Say that you

think that more of the neighbouring gentlemen could be got to be playing members. That you submit to them that it would be better to have a captain who could correspond with them, and talk to them, and in some sort manage them; and that, being perfectly acquainted with the game, and having long played it at a great public school, you propose yourself as captain for the foregoing reasons. That you propose to them to make the subscription of the gentlemen members at least double that of the working-men, for no other reason than that the gentlemen can afford it better; but that both classes of members shall have exactly the same right of voting equally in all that concerns the club. Say that you have consulted me upon the matter, and that I am of these opinions, and am ready to become chairman of the club, and to preside at their meetings, and to overlook its business affairs, and to give it five pounds a year, payable at the commencement of each season. Then, having brought them to this point, draw up the club's rules and regulations, amending them where they want amendment.

Discreetly done, I see no difficulty in this. But it can only be honourably and hopefully done by having the men together. And I would not have them at The Falstaff, but in the hall or

bodily this morning with defiant written instructions from me to inform the said mayor that, if he fail to make out his case, he (Dolby) is to return all the money taken, and to tell him that I will not set foot in his jurisdiction; whereupon the New Haven people will probably fall upon the mayor in his turn, and lead him a pleasant life.

Ever, my dear Harry, your affectionate father.

DCXV. MISS HOGARTH

PHILADELPHIA, Thursday, February 13, 1868.

We have got into an immense difficulty with the people of New Haven. I have a strong suspicion that one of our men (who sold there) has been speculating all this while, and that he must have put front seats in his pockets, and sold back ones. He denies what the mayor charges, but the mayor holds on grimly. Dolby set off from Baltimore as soon as we found out what was amiss, to examine and report; but some new feature of difficulty must have come out, for this morning he telegraphs from New York (where he had to sleep last night on his way to New Haven) that he is coming back for further consultation with the Chief. It will certainly hurt us, and will of course be distorted by the papers into all manner of shapes. My suspicion *may not* be correct, but I have an instinctive belief that it is. We shall probably have the old New York row (and loss) over again, unless I can catch this mayor tripping in an assertion.

In this very place we are half distracted by the speculators. They have been holding out for such high prices, that the public have held out too; and now (frightened at what they have done) the speculators are trying to sell their worst seats at half the cost price, so that we are in the ridiculous situation of having sold the room out, and yet not knowing what empty seats there may be. *We* could sell at our box-office to any extent; but *we* can't buy back of the speculators, because we informed the public that all the tickets were gone. And if we bought *under* our own price, and *sold* at our own price, we should at once be in treaty with the speculators, and should be making money by it! Dolby, the much bullied, will come back here presently, half bereft of his senses; and I should be half bereft of mine if the situation were not comically disagreeable.

Nothing will induce the people to believe in the farewells. At Baltimore on Tuesday night (a very brilliant night indeed), they asked as they came out, "When will Mr. Dickens read here again?" "Never." "Nonsense! Not come back, after such houses as these? Come. Say when he 'll read again." Just the same here. We could as soon persuade them that I am the President, as that I am going to read here, for the last time, to-morrow night.

There is a child of the Barney Williams's in this house — a little girl — to whom I presented a black doll when I was here last. I have seen her eye at the keyhole since I began writing this, and I think she and the doll are outside still. "When you sent it up to me by the coloured boy," she said after receiving it (coloured boy is the term for black waiter), "I gave such a cream that ma came running in and creamed too, 'cos she fort I 'd hurt myself. But I creamed a cream of joy." *She* had a friend to play with her that day, and brought the friend with her, to my infinite confusion. A friend all stockings, and much too tall, who sat on the sofa very far back, with her stockings sticking stiffly out in front of her, and glared at me and never spake word. Dolby found us confronted in a sort of fascination, like serpent and bird.

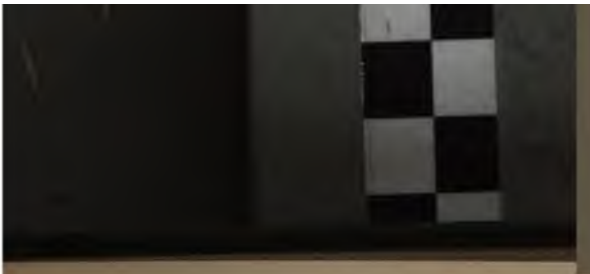
DCXVI. MISS HOGARTH

NEW YORK, Monday, February 17, 1868.

I got your letter of the 3d of February here this morning. As I am off at seven to-morrow morning, I answer it at once, though indeed I have nothing to say.

"True American" still sticking to me. But I am always ready for my work, and therefore don't much mind. Dolby and the Mayor of New Haven alternately embrace and exchange mortal defiances. In writing out some advertisements towards midnight last night he made a very good mistake. "The reading will be comprised within two *minutes*, and the audience are earnestly entreated to be seated ten *hours* before its commencement."

The weather has been finer lately, but the streets are in a horrible condition, through half-melted snow, and it is now snowing again. The walking-match (next Saturday week) is already in the Boston papers! I suppose half Boston will turn



out on the occasion. As a sure way of not being conspicuous, "the men" are going to walk in flannel! They are in a mingled state of comicality and gravity about it that is highly ridiculous. Yesterday being a bright cool day, I took Dolby for a "buster" of eight miles. As everybody here knows me, the spectacle of our splitting up the fashionable avenue (the only way out of town) excited the greatest amazement. No doubt *that* will be in the papers to-morrow. I give a gorgeous banquet to eighteen (ladies and gentlemen) after the match. Mr. and Mrs. Fields, Do. Ticknor, Longfellow and his daughter, Lowell, Holmes and his wife, etc., etc. Sporting speeches to be made, and the stakes (for hats) to be handed over to the winner.

My ship will not be the Cuba after all. She is to go into dock, and the Russia (a larger ship, and the latest built for the Cunard line) is to take her place.

Very glad to hear of Plorn's success. Best love to Mamie.

DCXVII. CHARLES FECHTER

WASHINGTON, February 24, 1868.

MY DEAR FECHTER, — Your letter reached me here yesterday. I have sent you a telegram (addressed to the theatre) this morning, and I write this by the earliest return mail.

My dear fellow, consider yourself my representative. Whatever you do, or desire to do, about the play, I fully authorise beforehand. Tell Webster, with my regard, that I think his proposal honest and fair; that I think it, in a word, like himself; and that I have perfect confidence in his good faith and liberality.

As to making money of the play in the United States here, Boucicault has filled Wilkie's head with golden dreams that have *nothing* in them. He makes no account of the fact that, wherever I go, the theatres (with my name in big letters) instantly begin playing versions of my books, and that the moment the Christmas number came over here they pirated it and played "No Thoroughfare." Now, I have inquired into the law, and am extremely *doubtful* whether I *could* have prevented this. *Why should they pay for the piece as you act it, when they have no actors, and when all they want is my name, and they can get that for nothing?*

Wilkie has uniformly written of you enthusiastically. In a

letter I had from him, dated the 10th of January, he described your conception and execution of the part in the most glowing terms. "Here Fechter is magnificent." "Here his superb playing brings the house down." "I should call even his exit in the last act one of the subtlest and finest things he does in the piece." "You can hardly imagine what he gets out of the part, or what he makes of his passionate love for Marguerite." These expressions, and many others like them, crowded his letter.

I never did so want to see a character played on the stage as I want to see you play Obenreizer. As the play was going when I last heard of it, I have some hopes that I MAY see it yet. Please God, your Adelphi dressing-room will be irradiated with the noble presence of "Never Wrong" (if you are acting), about the evening of Monday, the 4th of May!

I am doing enormous business. It is a wearying life, away from all I love, but I hope that the time will soon begin to spin away. Among the many changes that I find here is the comfortable change that the people are in general extremely considerate, and very observant of my privacy. Even in this place, I am really almost as much my own master as if I were in an English country town. Generally, they are very good audiences indeed. They do not (I think) perceive touches of art to *be* art; but they are responsive to the broad results of such touches. "Doctor Marigold" is a great favourite, and they laugh so unrestrainedly at "The Trial" from "Pickwick" (which you never heard), that it has grown about half as long again as it used to be.

If I could send you a "brandy cocktail" by post I would. It is a highly meritorious dram, which I hope to present to you at Gad's. My New York landlord made me a "Rocky Mountain Sneezer," which appeared to me to be compounded of all the spirits ever heard of in the world, with bitters, lemon, sugar, and snow. You can only make a true "sneezer" when the snow is lying on the ground.

There, my dear boy, my paper is out, and I am going to read "Copperfield." Count always on my fidelity and true attachment, and look out, as I have already said, for a distinguished visitor about Monday, the 4th of May.

Ever, my dear Fechter,

Your cordial and affectionate friend.

DCXVIII. MISS DICKENS

BOSTON, Tuesday, February 25, 1868.

It is so very difficult to know, by any exercise of common sense, what turn or height the political excitement may take next, and it may so easily, and so soon, swallow up all other things, that I think I shall suppress my next week's readings here (by good fortune not yet announced) and watch the course of events. Dolby's sudden desponding under these circumstances is so acute, that it is actually swelling his head as I glance at him in the glass while writing.

The catarrh is no better and no worse. The weather is intensely cold. The walking-match (of which I will send particulars) is to come off on Saturday. Mrs. Fields is more delightful than ever, and Fields more hospitable. My room is always radiant with brilliant flowers of their sending. I don't know whether I told you that the walking-match is to celebrate the extinction of February, and the coming of the day when I can say "next month."

DCXIX. MISS HOGARTH

BOSTON, Thursday, February 27, 1868.

This morning at breakfast I received yours of the 11th from Palace Gate House. I have very little news to give you in return for your budget. The walking-match is to come off on Saturday, and Fields and I went over the ground yesterday to measure the miles. We went at a tremendous pace. The condition of the ground is something indescribable, from half-melted snow, running water, and sheets and blocks of ice. The two performers have not the faintest notion of the weight of the task they have undertaken. I give a dinner afterwards, and have just now been settling the bill of fare and selecting the wines.

In the first excitement of the presidential impeachment, our houses instantly went down. After carefully considering the subject, I decided to take advantage of the fact that next week's four readings here have not yet been announced, and to abolish them altogether. Nothing in this country lasts long, and I think the public may be heartily tired of the President's name

by the 9th of March, when I read at a considerable distance from here. So behold me with a whole week's holiday in view! The Boston audiences have come to regard the readings and the reader as their peculiar property; and you would be at once amused and pleased if you could see the curious way in which they seem to plume themselves on both. They have taken to applauding, too, whenever they laugh or cry, and the result is very inspiriting. I shall remain here until Saturday, the 7th, but shall not read here, after to-morrow night, until the 1st of April, when I begin my Boston farewells, six in number.

Friday, 28th.

It has been snowing all night, and the city is in a miserable condition. We had a fine house last night for "Carol" and "Trial," and such an enthusiastic one that they persisted in a call after the "Carol," and, while I was out, covered the little table with flowers. The "True American" has taken a fresh start, as if it were quite a novelty, and is on the whole rather worse than ever to-day. The Cunard packet, the Australasian (a poor ship), is some days overdue, and Dolby is anxiously looking out for her. There is a lull in the excitement about the President, but the articles of impeachment are to be produced this afternoon, and then it may set in again. Osgood came into camp last night from selling in remote places, and reports that at Rochester and Buffalo (both places near the frontier), Canada people bought tickets, who had struggled across the frozen river and clambered over all sorts of obstructions to get them. Some of those halls turn out to be smaller than represented, but I have no doubt, to use an American expression, that we shall "get along."

To-morrow fortnight we purpose being at the Falls of Niagara, and then we shall turn back and really begin to wind up. I have got to know the "Carol" so well that I can't remember it, and occasionally go dodging about in the wildest manner to pick up lost pieces. They took it so tremendously last night that I was stopped every five minutes. One poor young girl in mourning burst into a passion of grief about Tiny Tim, and was taken out. This is all my news.

Each of the pedestrians is endeavouring to persuade the other to take something unwholesome before starting.

DCXX. MISS DICKENS

BOSTON, Monday, March 2, 1868.

A heavy gale of wind and a snow-storm oblige me to write suddenly for the Cunard steamer a day earlier than usual. The railroad between this and New York will probably be stopped somewhere. After all the hard weather we have had, this is the worst day we have seen.

The walking-match came off on Saturday, over tremendously difficult ground, against a biting wind, and through deep snow-wreaths. It was so cold, too, that our hair, beards, eyelashes, eyebrows, were frozen hard, and hung with icicles. The course was thirteen miles. They were close together at the turning-point, when Osgood went ahead at a splitting pace and with extraordinary endurance, and won by half a mile. Dolby did very well indeed, and begs that he may not be despised. In the evening I gave a very splendid dinner. Eighteen covers, most magnificent flowers, such table decoration as was never seen in these parts. The whole thing was a great success, and everybody was delighted.

I am holiday-making until Friday, when we start on the round of travel that is to bring us back here for the 1st of April. My holiday-making is simply thorough resting, except on Wednesday, when I dine with Longfellow. There is still great political excitement, but I hope it may not hurt us very much. My fear is that it may damage the farewell. Dolby is not of my mind as to this, and I hope he may be right. We are not quite determined whether Mrs. Fields did not desert our colours, by coming on the ground in a carriage, and having *bread soaked in brandy* put into the winning man's mouth as he steamed along. She pleaded that she would have done as much for Dolby, if *he* had been ahead, so we are inclined to forgive her. As she had done so much for me in the way of flowers, I thought I would show her a sight in that line at the dinner. You never saw anything like it. Two immense crowns; the base, of the choicest exotics; and the loops, oval masses of violets. In the centre of the table an immense basket, overflowing with enormous bell-mouthed lilies; all round the table a bright green border of wreathed creeper, with clustering roses at intervals; a rose for every button-hole, and

a bouquet for every lady. They made an exhibition of the table before dinner to numbers of people.

P. H. has just come in with a newspaper, containing a reference (in good taste!) to the walking-match. He posts it to you by this post.

It is telegraphed that the storm prevails over an immense extent of country, and is just the same at Chicago as here. I hope it may prove a wind-up. We are getting sick of the sound of sleigh-bells even.

Your account of Anne has greatly interested me.

DCXXI. CHARLES FECHTER

SYRACUSE, U. S. OF AMERICA,
Sunday Night, March 8, 1868.

MY DEAR FECHTER, — I am here in a most wonderful out-of-the-world place, which looks as if it had begun to be built yesterday, and were going to be imperfectly knocked together with a nail or two the day after to-morrow. I am in the worst inn that ever was seen, and outside is a thaw that places the whole country under water. I have looked out of window for

I mean to take my leave of readings in the autumn and winter, in a final series in England with Chappell. This will come into the way of literary work for a time, for after I have rested — don't laugh — it is a grim reality — I shall have to turn my mind to — ha! ha! ha! — to — ha! ha! ha! (more sepulchrally than before) — the — the CHRISTMAS NUMBER!!! I feel as if I had murdered a Christmas number years ago (perhaps I did!) and its ghost perpetually haunted me. Nevertheless in some blessed rest at Gad's, we will talk over stage matters, and all matters, in an even way, and see what we can make of them, please God. Be sure that I shall not be in London one evening, after disembarking, without coming round to the theatre to embrace you, my dear fellow.

I have had an American cold (the worst in the world) since Christmas Day. I read four times a week, with the most tremendous energy I can bring to bear upon it. I travel about pretty heavily. I am very resolute about calling on people, or receiving people, or dining out, and so save myself a great deal. I read in all sorts of places — churches, theatres, concert rooms, lecture halls. Every night I read I am described (mostly by people who have not the faintest notion of observing) from the sole of my boot to where the topmost hair of my head ought to be, but is not. Sometimes I am described as being "evidently nervous;" sometimes it is rather taken ill that "Mr. Dickens is so extraordinarily composed." My eyes are blue, red, grey, white, green, brown, black, hazel, violet, and rainbow-coloured. I am like a "well-to-do American gentleman," and the Emperor of the French, with an occasional touch of the Emperor of China, and a deterioration from the attributes of our famous townsman, Rufus W. B. D. Dodge Grumsher Pickville. I say all sorts of things that I never said, go to all sorts of places that I never saw or heard of, and have done all manner of things (in some previous state of existence, I suppose) that have quite escaped my memory. You ask your friend to describe what he is about. This is what he is about, every day and hour of his American life.

I hope to be back with you before you write to me!

Ever, my dear Fechter,

Your most affectionate and hearty friend.

P. S. — Don't let Madame Fechter, or Marie, or Paul forget me!

DCXXII. MISS HOGARTH

SYRACUSE, Sunday, March 8, 1868.

As we shall probably be busy all day to-morrow, I write this to-day, though it will not leave New York until Wednesday. This is a very grim place in a heavy thaw, and a most depressing one. The hotel also is surprisingly bad, quite a triumph in that way. We stood out for an hour in the melting snow, and came in again, having to change completely. Then we sat down by the stove (no fireplace), and there we are now. We were so afraid to go to bed last night, the rooms were so close and sour, that we played whist, double dummy, till we could n't bear each other any longer. We had an old buffalo for supper, and an old pig for breakfast, and we are going to have I don't know what for dinner at six. In the public rooms down stairs, a number of men (speechless) are sitting in rocking-chairs, with their feet against the window-frames, staring out at window and spitting dolefully at intervals. Scott is in tears, and George the gasman is suborning people to go and clean the hall, which is a marvel of dirt. And yet we have taken considerably over

had anything in the world to do with it, except having his name pressed into the service of the newspaper.

BUFFALO, Thursday, March 12, 1868.

I hope this may be in time for next Saturday's mail; but this is a long way from New York, and rivers are swollen with melted snow, and travelling is unusually slow.

Just now (two o'clock in the afternoon) I received your sad news of the death of poor dear Chauncey. It naturally goes to my heart. It is not a light thing to lose such a friend, and I truly loved him. In the first unreasonable train of feeling, I dwelt more than I should have thought possible on my being unable to attend his funeral. I know how little this really matters; but I know he would have wished me to be there with real honest tears for his memory, and I feel it very much. I never, never, never was better loved by man than I was by him, I am sure. Poor dear fellow, good, affectionate, gentle creature.

I have not as yet received any letter from Henri, nor do I think he can have written to New York by your mail. I believe that I am — I know that I *was* — one of the executors. In that case Mr. Jackson, his agent, will either write to me very shortly on Henri's information of my address, or inquiry will be made at Gad's or at the office about it.

It is difficult for me to write more just now. The news is a real shock at such a distance, and I must read to-night, and I must compose my mind. Let Mekitty know that I received her violets with great pleasure, and that I sent her my best love and my best thanks.

On the 25th of February I read "Copperfield" and "Bob" at Boston. Either on that very day, or very close upon it, I was describing his (Townshend's) house to Fields, and telling him about the great Danby picture that he should see when he came to London.

DCXXIII. JOHN FORSTER

BUFFALO, March 13, 1868.

We go to the Falls of Niagara to-morrow for our own pleasure; and I take all the men, as a treat. We found Rochester last Tuesday in a very curious state. Perhaps you know that

the Great Falls of the Genesee River (really very fine, even so near Niagara) are at that place. In the height of a sudden thaw, an immense bank of ice above the rapids refused to yield; so that the town was threatened (for the second time in four years) with submersion. Boats were ready in the streets, all the people were up all night, and none but the children slept. In the dead of the night a thundering noise was heard, the ice gave way, the swollen river came raging and roaring down the Falls, and the town was safe. Very picturesque! but "not very good for business," as the manager says. Especially as the hall stands in the centre of danger, and had ten feet of water in it on the last occasion of flood. But I think we had above £200 English. On the previous night at Syracuse — a most out-of-the-way and unintelligible-looking place, with apparently no people in it — we had £375 odd. Here, we had last night, and shall have to-night, whatever we can cram into the hall.

This Buffalo has become a large and important town, with numbers of German and Irish in it. But it is very curious to notice, as we touch the frontier, that the American female beauty dies out; and a woman's face clumsily compounded of German, Irish, Western America, and Canadian, not yet fused together, and not yet moulded, obtains instead. Our show of Beauty at night is, generally, remarkable; but we had not a dozen pretty women in the whole throng last night, and the faces were all blunt. I have just been walking about and observing the same thing in the streets. . . . The winter has been so severe, that the hotel on the English side at Niagara (which has the best view of the Falls, and is for that reason very preferable) is not yet open. So we go, perforce, to the American, which telegraphs back to our telegram: "All Mr. Dickens's requirements perfectly understood." I have not yet been in more than two *very bad* inns. I have been in some, where a good deal of what is popularly called "slopping round" has prevailed; but have been able to get on very well. "Slopping round," so used, means untidyness and disorder. It is a comically expressive phrase, and has many meanings. Fields was asking the price of a quarter-cask of sherry the other day. "Wa'al, Mussr ,Fields," the merchant replies, "that varies according to quality, as is but nay'tral. If yer wa'ant a sherry just to slop round with it, I can fix you some at a very low figger."

DCXXIV. MISS DICKENS

ROCHESTER, Monday, March 16, 1868.

I found yours of the 28th February when I came back here last night. We have had two brilliant sunny days at Niagara, and have seen that wonderful place under the finest circumstances.

Inclosed I return you Homan's estimate; let all that work be done, including the curtains.

As to the hall, I have my doubts whether one of the parqueted floors made by Aaron Smith's, of Bond Street, ought not to be better than tiles, for the reason that perhaps the nature of the house's construction might render the "bed" necessary for wooden flooring more easy to be made than the "bed" necessary for tiles. I don't think you can do better than call in the trusty Lillie to advise. Decide with your aunt on which appears to be better, under the circumstances. Have estimate made for *cash*, select patterns and colours, and let the work be done out of hand. (Here 's a prompt order; now I draw breath.) Let it be thoroughly well done — no half measures.

There is a great thaw all over the country here, and I think it has done the catarrh good. I am to read at the famous New Haven on Tuesday, the 24th. I hope without a row, but cannot say. The readings are running out fast now, and we are growing very restless.

This is a short letter, but we are pressed for time. It is two o'clock, and we dine at three, before reading. To-morrow we rise at six, and have eleven hours' railway or so. We have now come back from our farthest point, and are steadily working towards home.

DCXXV. JOHN FORSTER

ROCHESTER, N. Y., March 16, 1868.

After two most brilliant days at the Falls of Niagara, we got back here last night. To-morrow morning we turn out at six for a long railway journey back to Albany. But it is nearly all "back" now, thank God! I don't know how long, though, before turning, we might have gone on at Buffalo. . . . We went everywhere at the Falls, and saw them in every aspect.

There is a suspension bridge across, now, some two miles or more from the Horse Shoe; and another, half a mile nearer, is to be opened in July. They are very fine but very ticklish, hanging aloft there, in the continual vibration of the thundering water; nor is one greatly reassured by the printed notice that troops must not cross them at step, that bands of music must not play in crossing, and the like. I shall never forget the last aspect in which we saw Niagara yesterday. We had been everywhere, when I thought of struggling (in an open carriage) up some very difficult ground for a good distance, and getting where we could stand above the river, and see it, as it rushes forward to its tremendous leap, coming for miles and miles. All away to the horizon on our right was a wonderful confusion of bright green and white water. As we stood watching it with our faces to the top of the Falls, our backs were towards the sun. The majestic valley below the Falls, so seen through the vast cloud of spray, was made of rainbow. The high banks, the riven rocks, the forests, the bridge, the buildings, the air, the sky, were all made of rainbow. Nothing in Turner's finest water-colour drawings, done in his greatest day, is so ethereal, so imaginative, so gorgeous in colour, as what I then beheld. I seemed to be lifted from the earth and to be looking into heaven. What I once said to you, as I witnessed the scene five-and-twenty years ago, all came back at this most affecting and sublime sight. The "muddy vesture of our clay" falls from us as we look. . . . I chartered a separate carriage for our men, so that they might see all in their own way, and at their own time.

There is a great deal of water out between Rochester and New York, and travelling is very uncertain, as I fear we may find to-morrow. There is again some little alarm here on account of the river rising too fast. But our to-night's house is far ahead of the first. Most charming halls in these places; excellent for sight and sound. Almost invariably built as theatres, with stage, scenery, and good dressing-rooms. Audience seated to perfection (every seat always separate), excellent doorways and passages, and brilliant light. My screen and gas are set up in front of the drop-curtain, and the most delicate touches will tell anywhere. No creature but my own men ever near me.

DCXXVI. W. C. MACREADY

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., Saturday, March 21, 1868.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — What with perpetual reading and travelling, what with a "true American catarrh" (on which I am complimented almost boastfully), and what with one of the severest winters ever known, your coals of fire received by the last mail did not burn my head so much as they might have done under less excusatory circumstances. But they scorched it too!

You would find the general aspect of America and the Americans decidedly much improved. You would find immeasurably greater consideration and respect for your privacy than of old. You would find a steady change for the better everywhere, except (oddly enough) in the railroads generally, which seem to have stood still, while everything else has moved. But there is an exception westward. There the express trains have now a very delightful carriage called a "drawing-room car," literally a series of little private drawing-rooms, with sofas and a table in each, opening out of a little corridor. In each, too, is a large plate-glass window, with which you can do as you like. As you pay extra for this luxury, it may be regarded as the first move towards two classes of passengers. When the railroad straight away to San Francisco (in six days) shall be opened through, it will not only have these drawing-rooms, but sleeping-rooms too; a bell in every little apartment communicating with a steward's pantry, a restaurant, a staff of servants, marble washing-stands, and a barber's shop! I looked into one of these cars a day or two ago, and it was very ingeniously arranged and quite complete.

I left Niagara last Sunday, and travelled on to Albany, through three hundred miles of flood, villages deserted, bridges broken, fences drifting away, nothing but tearing water, floating ice, and absolute wreck and ruin. The train gave in altogether at Utica, and the passengers were let loose there for the night. As I was due at Albany, a very active superintendent of works did all he could to "get Mr. Dickens along," and in the morning we resumed our journey through the water, with a hundred men in seven-league boots pushing the ice from before us with long poles. How we got to Albany I can't say, but we

got there somehow, just in time for a triumphal "Carol" and "Trial." All the tickets had been sold, and we found the Albanians in a state of great excitement. You may imagine what the flood was when I tell you that we took the passengers out of two trains that had their fires put out by the water four-and-twenty hours before, and cattle from trucks that had been in the water I don't know how long, but so long that the sheep had begun to eat each other! It was a horrible spectacle, and the haggard human misery of their faces was quite a new study. There was a fine breath of spring in the air concurrently with the great thaw; but lo and behold! last night it began to snow again, with a strong wind, and to-day a snowdrift covers this place with all the desolation of winter once more. I never was so tired of the sight of snow. As to sleighing, I have been sleighing about to that extent that I am sick of the sound of a sleigh-bell.

I have seen all our Boston friends, except Curtis. Ticknor is dead. The rest are very little changed, except that Longfellow has a perfectly white flowing beard and long white hair. But he does not otherwise look old, and is infinitely handsomer than he was. I have been constantly with them all, and they have always talked much of you. It is the established joke that Boston is my "native place," and we hold all sorts of hearty foregatherings. They all come to every reading, and are always in a most delightful state of enthusiasm. They give me a parting dinner at the club, on the Thursday before Good Friday. To pass from Boston personal to New York theatrical, I will mention here that one of the proprietors of my New York hotel is one of the proprietors of Niblo's, and the most active. Consequently I have seen the "Black Crook" and the "White Fawn," in majesty, from an arm-chair in the first entrance, P. S., more than once. Of these astonishing dramas, I beg to report (seriously) that I have found no human creature "behind" who has the slightest idea what they are about (upon my honour, my dearest Macready!), and that having some amiable small talk with a neat little Spanish woman, who is the *première danseuse*, I asked her, in joke, to let me measure her skirt with my dress glove. Holding the glove by the tip of the forefinger, I found the skirt to be just three gloves long, and yet its length was much in excess of the skirts of two hundred other ladies, whom the carpenters were at that moment getting into

their places for a transformation scene, on revolving columns, on wires and "travellers" in iron cradles, up in the flies, down in the cellars, on every description of float that Wilmot, gone distracted, could imagine!

I have taken my passage for Liverpool from New York in the Cunarder Russia, on the 22d of April. I had the second officer's cabin on deck coming out, and I have the chief steward's cabin on deck going home, because it will be on the sunny side of the ship. I have experienced nothing here but good-humour and cordiality. In the autumn and winter I have arranged with Chappells to take my farewell of reading in the United Kingdom for ever and ever.

I am delighted to hear of Benvenuta's marriage, and I think her husband a very lucky man. Johnnie has my profound sympathy under his examinatorial woes. The noble boy will give me Gavazzi revised and enlarged, I expect, when I next come to Cheltenham. I will give you and Mrs. Macready all my American experiences when you come to London, or, better still, to Gad's. Meanwhile I send my hearty love to all, not forgetting dear Katie.

Niagara is not at all spoiled by a very dizzy-looking suspension bridge. Is to have another still nearer to the Horse Shoe opened in July. My last sight of that scene (last Sunday) was thus: We went up to the rapids above the Horse Shoe — say two miles from it — and through the great cloud of spray. Everything in the magnificent valley — buildings, forest, high banks, air, water, everything — was *made of rainbow*. Turner's most imaginative drawing in his finest day has nothing in it so ethereal, so gorgeous in fancy, so celestial. We said to one another (Dolby and I), "Let it for ever more remain so," and shut our eyes and came away.

God bless you and all dear to you, my dear old friend!

I am ever your affectionate and loving.

DCXXVII. MISS DICKENS

PORTLAND, Sunday, March 29, 1868.

I should have written to you by the last mail, but I really was too unwell to do it. The writing-day was last Friday, when I ought to have left Boston for New Bedford (fifty-five miles) before eleven in the morning. But I was so exhausted

that I could not be got up, and had to take my chance of an evening's train producing me in time to read, which it just did. With the return of snow, nine days ago, the "True American" (which had lulled) came back as bad as ever. I have coughed from two or three in the morning until five or six, and have been absolutely sleepless. I have had no appetite besides, and no taste. Last night here I took some laudanum, and it is the only thing that has done me good. But the life in this climate is so very hard. When I did manage to get from Boston to New Bedford, I read with my utmost force and vigour. Next morning, well or ill, I must turn out at seven to get back to Boston on my way here.

I dine at Boston at three, and at five must come on here (a hundred and thirty miles or so) for to-morrow night, there being no Sunday train. To-morrow night I read here in a very large place, and Tuesday morning at six I must start again to get back to Boston once more. But after to-morrow night I have only the Boston and New York farewells, thank God! I am most grateful to think that when we came to devise the details of the tour, I foresaw that it could never be done, as Dolby and Osgood proposed, by one unassisted man, as if he were a machine. If I had not cut out the work, and cut out Canada, I could never have gone there, I am quite sure. Even as it is, I have just now written to Dolby (who is in New York), to see my doctor there, and ask him to send me some composing medicine that I can take at night, inasmuch as without sleep I cannot get through. However sympathetic and devoted the people are about me, they *cannot* be got to comprehend that one's being able to do the two hours with spirit when the time comes round may be co-existent with the consciousness of great depression and fatigue. I don't mind saying all this, now that the labour is so nearly over. You shall have a brighter account of me, please God, when I close this at Boston.

Monday, March 30th.

Without any artificial aid, I got a splendid night's rest last night, and consequently am very much freshened up to-day. Yesterday I had a fine walk by the sea, and to-day I have had another on the heights overlooking it.

Boston, Tuesday, 31st.

I have safely arrived here, just in time to add a line to that effect, and get this off by to-morrow's English mail from New York. Catarrh rather better. Everything triumphant last night, except no sleep again. I suppose Dolby to be now on his way back to join me here. I am much mistaken if the political crisis do not damage the farewells by almost one half.

I hope that I am certainly better altogether.

My room well decorated with flowers, of course, and Mr. and Mrs. Fields coming to dinner. They are the most devoted of friends, and never in the way and never out of it.

DCXXVIII. MISS HOGARTH

Boston, Wednesday, April 1, 1868.

I received your letter of from the 14th to the 17th of March, here, last night. My New York doctor has prescribed for me promptly, and I hope I am better. I am certainly no worse. We shall do (to the best of my belief) *very well* with the farewells here and at New York, but not greatly. Everything is at a standstill, pending the impeachment and the next presidential election. I forgot whether I told you that the New York press are going to give me a public dinner, on Saturday, the 18th.

I hear (but not from himself) that Wills has had a bad fall in hunting, and is, or has been, laid up. I am supposed, I take it, not to know this until I hear it from himself.

Thursday.

My notion of the farewells is pretty certain now to turn out right. It is not at all probable that we shall do anything enormous. Every pulpit in Massachusetts will resound to violent politics to-day and to-night. You remember the Hutchinson family? I have had a grateful letter from John Hutchinson. He speaks of "my sister Abby" as living in New York. The immediate object of his note is to invite me to the marriage of his daughter, twenty-one years of age.

You will see by the evidence of this piece of paper that I am using up my stationery. Scott has just been making anxious calculations as to our powers of holding out in the articles of tooth-powder, etc. The calculations encourage him to believe that we shall just hold out, and no more. I think I am still

better to-day than I was yesterday; but I am far from strong, and have no appetite. To see me at my little table at night, you would think me the freshest of the fresh. And this is the marvel of Fields' life.

I don't forget that this is Forster's birthday.

Friday Afternoon, 3d.

Catarrh worse than ever! And we don't know (at four) whether I can read to-night or must stop. Otherwise all well.

DCXXIX. MISS DICKENS

Boston, Tuesday, April 7, 1868.

I not only read last Friday, when I was doubtful of being able to do so, but read as I never did before, and astonished the audience quite as much as myself. You never saw or heard such a scene of excitement.

Longfellow and all the Cambridge men urged me to give in. I have been very near doing so, but feel stronger to-day. I cannot tell whether the catarrh may have done me any lasting injury in the lungs or other breathing organs until I shall have

mail, if I should knock up as to reading. I am tremendously "beat," but I feel really and unaffectedly so much stronger to-day, both in my body and hopes, that I am much encouraged. I have a fancy that I turned my worst time last night.

Dolby is as tender as a woman and as watchful as a doctor. He never leaves me during the reading now, but sits at the side of the platform and keeps his eye upon me all the time. Ditto George, the gasman, steadiest and most reliable man I ever employed. I am the more hopeful of my not having to relinquish a reading, because last night was "Copperfield" and "Bob" — by a quarter of an hour the longest, and, in consideration of the storm, by very much the most trying. Yet I was far fresher afterwards than I have been these three weeks.

I have "Dombey" to do to-night, and must go through it carefully; so here ends my report. The personal affection of the people in this place is charming to the last.

DCXXX. JAMES T. FIELDS

ABOARD THE RUSSIA, BOUND FOR LIVERPOOL,
Sunday, April 26, 1868.

MY DEAR FIELDS, — In order that you may have the earliest intelligence of me, I begin this note to-day in my small cabin, purposing (if it should prove practicable) to post it at Queenstown for the return steamer.

We are already past the Banks of Newfoundland, although our course was seventy miles to the south, with the view of avoiding ice seen by Judkins in the Scotia on his passage out to New York. The Russia is a magnificent ship, and has dashed along bravely. We had made more than thirteen hundred and odd miles at noon to-day. The wind, after being a little capricious, rather threatens at the present time to turn against us, but our run is already eighty miles ahead of the Russia's last run in this direction — a very fast one. . . . To all whom it may concern, report the Russia in the highest terms. She rolls more easily than the other Cunard Screws, is kept in perfect order, and is most carefully looked after in all departments. We have had nothing approaching to heavy weather; still one can speak to the trim of the ship. Her captain, a gentleman; bright, polite, good-natured, and vigilant. . . .

As to me, I am greatly better, I hope. I have got on my

right boot to-day for the first time; the "True American" seems to be turning faithless at last; and I made a Gad's Hill breakfast this morning, as a further advance on having otherwise eaten and drunk all day ever since Wednesday.

You will see Anthony Trollope, I dare say. What was my amazement to see him with these eyes come aboard in the mail tender just before we started! He had come out in the Scotia just in time to dash off again in said tender to shake hands with me, knowing me to be aboard here. It was most heartily done. He is on a special mission of convention with the United States post-office.

We have been picturing your movements, and have duly checked off your journey home, and have talked about you continually. But I have thought about you both, even much, much more. You will never know how I love you both; or what you have been to me in America, and will always be to me everywhere; or how fervently I thank you.

All the working of the ship seems to be done on my forehead. It is scrubbed and holystoned (my head — not the deck) at three every morning. It is scraped and swabbed all day. Eight pairs of heavy boots are now clattering on it, getting the ship under sail again. Legions of ropes'-ends are flopped upon it as I write, and I must leave off with Dolby's love.

Thursday, 30th.

Soon after I left off as above we had a gale of wind which blew all night. For a few hours on the evening side of midnight there was no getting from this cabin of mine to the saloon, or *vice versa*, so heavily did the sea break over the decks. The ship, however, made nothing of it, and we were all right again by Monday afternoon. Except for a few hours yesterday (when we had a very light head-wind), the weather has been constantly favourable, and we are now bowling away at a great rate, with a fresh breeze filling all our sails. We expect to be at Queenstown between midnight and three in the morning.

I hope, my dear Fields, you may find this legible, but I rather doubt it, for there is motion enough on the ship to render writing to a landsman, however accustomed to pen and ink, rather a difficult achievement. Besides which, I slide away gracefully from the paper, whenever I want to be particularly expressive. . . .

——, sitting opposite to me at breakfast, always has the following items: A large dish of porridge into which he casts slices of butter and a quantity of sugar. Two cups of tea. A steak. Irish stew. Chutnee and marmalade. Another deputation of two has solicited a reading to-night. Illustrious novelist has unconditionally and absolutely declined. More love, and more to that, from your ever affectionate friend.

DCXXXI. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, Monday, May 11, 1868.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — I am delighted to have your letter. It comes to me like a faithful voice from dear old Rockingham, and awakens many memories.

The work in America has been so very hard, and the winter there has been so excessively severe, that I really have been very unwell for some months. But I had not been at sea three days on the passage home when I became myself again.

If you will arrange with Mary Boyle any time for coming here, we shall be charmed to see you, and I will adapt my arrangements accordingly. I make this suggestion because she generally comes here early in the summer season. But if you will propose yourself *anyhow*, giving me a margin of a few days in case of my being pre-engaged for this day or that, we will (as my American friends say) "fix it."

What with travelling, reading night after night, and speech-making day after day, I feel the peace of the country beyond all expression. On board ship coming home, a "deputation" (two in number, of whom only one could get into my cabin, while the other looked in at my window) came to ask me to read to the passengers that evening in the saloon. I respectfully replied that sooner than do it I would assault the captain, and be put in irons.

Ever affectionately yours.

DCXXXII. JAMES T. FIELDS

"ALL THE YEAR ROUND" OFFICE, May 15, 1868.

MY DEAR FIELDS, — I have found it so extremely difficult to write about America (though never so briefly) without appearing to blow trumpets on the one hand, or to be inconsistent

with my avowed determination *not* to write about it on the other, that I have taken the simple course inclosed. The number will be published on the 6th of June. It appears to me to be the most modest and manly course, and to derive some graceful significance from its title.

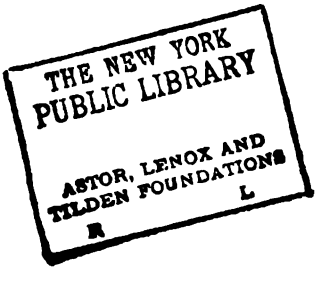
Thank my dear Mrs. Fields for me for her delightful letter received on the 16th. I will write to her very soon, and tell her about the dogs. I would write by this post, but that Wills's absence (in Sussex, and getting no better there as yet) so overwhelms me with business that I can scarcely get through it.

Miss me? Ah, my dear fellow, but how do I miss *you!* We talk about you both at Gad's Hill every day of our lives. And I never see the place looking very pretty indeed, or hear the birds sing all day long and the nightingales all night, without restlessly wishing that you were both there.

With best love, and truest and most enduring regard, ever, my dear Fields,

Your most affectionate.

. . . I hope you will receive by Saturday's Cunard a case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DCXXXIII. MRS. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Saturday, May 16, 1868.

MY DEAR MRS. CATTERMOLE, — On my return from America just now, I accidentally heard that George had been ill. My sister-in-law had heard it from Forster, but vaguely. Until I received your letter of Wednesday's date, I had no idea that he had been very ill; and should have been greatly shocked by knowing it, were it not for the hopeful and bright assurance you give me that he is greatly better.

My old affection for him has never cooled. The last time he dined with me, I asked him to come again that day ten years, for I was perfectly certain (this was my small joke) that I should not set eyes upon him sooner. The time being fully up, I hope you will remind him, with my love, that he is due. His hand is upon these walls here, so I should like him to see for himself, and *you* to see for *yourself*, and in this hope I shall pursue his complete recovery.

I heartily sympathise with you in your terrible anxiety, and in your vast relief; and, with many thanks for your letter, am ever, my dear Mrs. Cattermole,

Affectionately yours.

DCXXXIV. CHARLES FECHTER

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Friday, May 2, 1868.

MY DEAR FECHTER, — I have an idea about the bedroom act, which I should certainly have suggested if I had been at our "repetitions" here.[1] I want it done *to the sound of the Waterfall.* I want the sound of the Waterfall louder and softer as the wind rises and falls, to be spoken through — like the music. I want the Waterfall *listened to when spoken of, and not looked out at.* The mystery and gloom of the scene would be greatly helped by this, and it would be new and picturesquely fanciful.

I am very anxious to hear from you how the piece seems to

[1] The play of *No Thoroughfare* was produced at the Adelphi Theatre, under the management of Mr. Webster.

go,[1] and how the artists who are to act it seem to understand their parts. Pray tell me, too, when you write, how you found Madame Fechter, and give all our loves to all.

Ever heartily yours.

DCXXXV. MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS

GAD'S HILL, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
May 25, 1868.

MY DEAR MRS. FIELDS, — As you ask me about the dogs, I begin with them. When I came down first, I came to Gravesend, five miles off. The two Newfoundland dogs coming to meet me with the usual carriage and the usual driver, and beholding me coming in my usual dress out at the usual door, it struck me that their recollection of my having been absent for any unusual time was at once cancelled. They behaved (they are both young dogs) exactly in their usual manner; coming behind the basket phaeton as we trotted along, and lifting their heads to have their ears pulled — a special attention which they receive from no one else. But when I drove into the stable-yard, Linda (the St. Bernard) was greatly excited; weeping profusely, and throwing herself on her back that she might caress my foot with her great fore-paws. Mamie's little dog, too, Mrs. Bouncer, barked in the greatest agitation on being called down and asked by Mamie, "Who is this?" and tore round and round me, like the dog in the Faust outlines. You must know that all the farmers turned out on the road in their market-chaises to say, "Welcome home, sir!" and that all the houses along the road were dressed with flags; and that our servants, to cut out the rest, had dressed this house so that every brick of it was hidden. They had asked Mamie's permission to "ring the alarm-bell" (!) when master drove up; but Mamie, having some slight idea that that compliment might awaken master's sense of the ludicrous, had recommended bell abstinence. But on Sunday the village choir (which includes the bell-ringers) made amends. After some unusual brief pious reflections in the crowns of their hats at the end of the sermon, the ringers bolted out, and rang like mad until I got home. There had been a conspiracy among the villagers to take the

[1] Mr. Fechter was at this time superintending the production of a French version of *No Thoroughfare*, in Paris. It was called *L'Abîme*.

horse out, if I had come to our own station, and draw me here. Mamie and Georgy had got wind of it and warned me.

Divers birds sing here all day, and the nightingales all night. The place is lovely, and in perfect order. I have put five mirrors in the Swiss châlet (where I write), and they reflect and refract in all kinds of ways the leaves that are quivering at the windows, and the great fields of waving corn, and the sail-dotted river. My room is up among the branches of the trees; and the birds and the butterflies fly in and out, and the green branches shoot in, at the open windows, and the lights and shadows of the clouds come and go with the rest of the company. The scent of the flowers, and indeed of everything that is growing for miles and miles, is most delicious.

Dolby (who sends a world of messages) found his wife much better than he expected, and the children (wonderful to relate!) perfect. The little girl winds up her prayers every night with a special commendation to Heaven of me and the pony — as if I must mount him to get there! I dine with Dolby (I was going to write "him," but found it would look as if I were going to dine with the pony) at Greenwich this very day, and if your ears do not burn from six to nine this evening, then the Atlantic is a non-conductor. We are already settling — think of this! — the details of my farewell course of readings. I am brown beyond belief, and cause the greatest disappointment in all quarters by looking so well. It is really wonderful what those fine days at sea did for me! My doctor was quite broken down in spirits when he saw me, for the first time since my return, last Saturday. "Good Lord!" he said, recoiling, "seven years younger!"

It is time I should explain the otherwise inexplicable inclosure. Will you tell Fields, with my love (I suppose he has n't used *all* the pens yet?) that I think there is in Tremont Street a set of my books, sent out by Chapman, not arrived when I departed. Such set of the immortal works of our illustrious, etc., is designed for the gentleman to whom the inclosure is addressed. If T., F. and Co. will kindly forward the set (carriage paid) with the inclosure to ——'s address, I will invoke new blessings on their heads, and will get Dolby's little daughter to mention them nightly.

"No Thoroughfare" is very shortly coming out in Paris, where it is now in active rehearsal. It is still playing here,

but without Fechter, who has been very ill. The doctor's dismissal of him to Paris, however, and his getting better there, enables him to get up the play there. He and Wilkie missed so many pieces of stage-effect here, that unless I am quite satisfied with his report, I shall go over and try my stage-managerial hand at the Vaudeville Theatre. I particularly want the drugging and attempted robbing in the bedroom scene at the Swiss inn to be done to the sound of a waterfall rising and falling with the wind. Although in the very opening of that scene they speak of the waterfall and listen to it, nobody thought of its mysterious music. I could make it, with a good stage-carpenter, in an hour.

My dear love to Fields once again. Same to you and him from Mamie and Georgy. I cannot tell you both how I miss you, or how overjoyed I should be to see you here.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Fields,

Your most affectionate friend.

DCXXXVI. W. C. MACREADY

GAD'S HILL, Wednesday, June 10, 1868.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — Since my return from America, I have been so overwhelmed with business that I have not had time even to write to you. You may imagine what six months of arrear are to dispose of; added to this, Wills has received a concussion of the brain (from an accident in the hunting-field), and is sent away by the doctors, and strictly prohibited from even writing a note. Consequently all the business and money details of "All the Year Round" devolve upon me. And I have had to get them up, for I have never had experience of them. Then I am suddenly entreated to go to Paris, to look after the French version of "No Thoroughfare" on the stage. And I go, and come back, leaving it a great success.

I hope Mrs. Macready and you have not abandoned the idea of coming here? The expression of this hope is the principal, if not the only, object of this present note. May the amiable secretary vouchsafe a satisfactory reply!

Katie, Mary, and Georgina send their very best love to your Katie and Mrs. Macready. The undersigned is in his usual brilliant condition, and indeed has greatly disappointed them at home here, by coming back "so brown and looking so well."

They expected a wreck, and were, at first, much mortified. But they are getting over it now.

To my particular friends, the noble boy and Johnny, I beg to be warmly remembered.

Ever, my dearest Macready,
Your most affectionate.

DCXXXVII. JAMES T. FIELDS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, Tuesday, July 7, 1868.

MY DEAR FIELDS, — I have delayed writing to you (and Mrs. Fields, to whom my love) until I should have seen Longfellow. When he was in London the first time he came and went without reporting himself, and left me in a state of unspeakable discomfiture. Indeed, I should not have believed in his having been here at all, if Mrs. Procter had not told me of his calling to see Procter. However, on his return he wrote to me from the Langham Hotel, and I went up to town to see him, and to make an appointment for his coming here. He, the girls, and Appleton, came down last Saturday night and stayed until Monday forenoon. I showed them all the neighbouring country that could be shown in so short a time, and they finished off with a tour of inspection of the kitchens, pantry, wine-cellar, pickles, sauces, servants' sitting-room, general household stores, and even the Cellar Book, of this illustrious establishment. Forster and Kent (the latter wrote certain verses to Longfellow, which have been published in "The Times," and which I sent to D——) came down for a day, and I hope we all had a really "good time." I turned out a couple of postilions in the old red jacket of the old red royal Dover Road, for our ride; and it was like a holiday ride in England fifty years ago. Of course we went to look at the old houses in Rochester, and the old cathedral, and the old castle, and the house for the six poor travellers who, "not being rogues or proctors, shall have lodging, entertainment, and fourpence each."

Nothing can surpass the respect paid to Longfellow here, from the Queen downward. He is everywhere received and courted, and finds (as I told him he would, when we talked of it in Boston) the working-men at least as well acquainted with his books as the classes socially above them. . . .

...sday I attended, as sponsor, the christening of ... and heir — a most jolly baby, who held on tight ...'s left whisker while the service was performed. ... time, too, his little sister, connecting me with the pony, ... and down the centre aisle, noisily driving herself as ...ated animal, so that it went very hard with the spon... ...ity.

... not yet recovered from that concussion of the brain, ... all his work to do. This may account for my not ... to devise a Christmas number, but I seem to have ...y invention in America. In case you should find it, ... send it over. I am going up to town to-day to dine ...ongfellow. And now, my dear Fields, you know all ...ut me and mine.

You are enjoying your holiday? and are still thinking some... ...es of our Boston days, as I do? and are maturing schemes ... coming here next summer? A satisfactory reply to the last ...stion is particularly entreated.

I am delighted to find you both so well pleased with the Blind Book scheme.[1] I said nothing of it to you when we were together, though I had made up my mind, because I wanted to come upon you with that little burst from a distance. It seemed something like meeting again when I remitted the money and thought of your talking of it.

The dryness of the weather is amazing. All the ponds and surface-wells about here are waterless, and the poor people suffer greatly. The people of this village have only one spring to resort to, and it is a couple of miles from many cottages. I do not let the great dogs swim in the canal, because the people have to drink of it. But when they get into the Medway it is hard to get them out again. The other day Bumble (the son, Newfoundland dog) got into difficulties among some floating timber, and became frightened. Don (the father) was standing by me, shaking off the wet and looking on carelessly, when all of a sudden he perceived something amiss, and went in with a bound and brought Bumble out by the ear. The scientific way in which he towed him along was charming.

Ever your loving.

[1] A copy of *The Old Curiosity Shop*, in raised letters for the use of the blind, had been printed by Charles Dickens's order at the "Perkins Institution for the Blind" in Boston, and presented by him to that institution in this year.

DCXXXVIII. J. E. MILLAIS, R. A.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, July 19, 1868.

MY DEAR MILLAIS, — I received the inclosed letter yesterday, and I have — perhaps unjustly — some vague suspicions of it. As I know how faithful and zealous you have been in all relating to poor Leech, I make no apology for asking you whether you can throw any light upon its contents.

You will be glad to hear that Charles Collins is decidedly better to-day, and is out of doors.

Believe me always, faithfully yours.

DCXXXIX. MRS. HENRY AUSTIN

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, July 21, 1868.

MY DEAR LETITIA, — You will have had a telegram from me to-day. I received your sad news[1] by this morning's post. They never, without express explanation, mind "Immediate" on a letter addressed to the office, because half the people who write there on business that does not press, or on no business at all, so mark their letters.

On Thursday I have people to see and matters to attend to, both at the office and at Coutts's, which, in Wills's absence, I cannot forego or depute to another. But, *between ourselves*, I must add something else: I have the greatest objection to attend a funeral in which my affections are not strongly and immediately concerned. I have no notion of a funeral as a matter of form or ceremony. And just as I should expressly prohibit the summoning to my own burial of anybody who was not very near or dear to me, so I revolt from myself appearing at that solemn rite unless the deceased were very near or dear to me. I cannot endure being dressed up by an undertaker as part of his trade show. I was not in this poor good fellow's house in his lifetime, and I feel that I have no business there when he lies dead in it. My mind is penetrated with sympathy and compassion for the young widow, but that feeling is a real

[1] On the death of Mr. Henry Austin, cousin and adopted child of Mr. and Mrs. Austin.

thing, and my attendance as a mourner would not be — to myself. It would be to you, I know, but it would not be to myself. I know full well that you cannot delegate to me your memories of and your associations with the deceased, and the more true and tender they are the more invincible is my objection to become a form in the midst of the most awful realities.

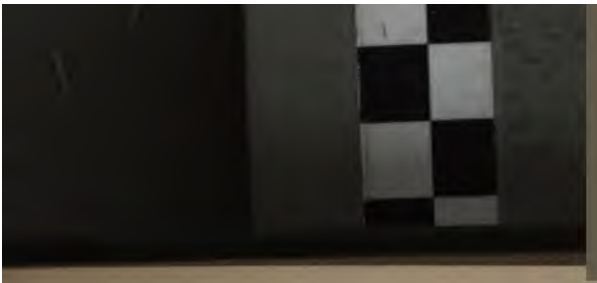
With love and condolence from Georgina, Mary, and Katie,

Believe me, ever your affectionate brother.

DCXL. MRS. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

GAD'S HILL, Wednesday, July 22, 1868.

MY DEAR MRS. CATTERMOLE, — Of course I will sign your memorial to the Academy. If you take either of the Landseers, certainly take Edwin (1, St. John's Wood Road, N. W.). But if you would be content with Frith, I have already spoken to him, and believe that I can answer for him. I shall be at "All the Year Round" Office, 26, Wellington Street, London, to-morrow, from eleven to three. Frith will be here on Saturday, and I shall be here too. I spoke to him a fortnight ago, and I found him most earnest in the cause. He said he felt



advance sheets from England, so that there may be simultaneous publication in the two countries. And success in England is of so much importance towards the achievement of success in America, that I greatly doubt whether previous publications in America would often be worth more to an American publisher or manager than simultaneous publication. Concerning the literary man in Parliament who would undertake to bring in a Bill for such an amendment of our copyright law, with weight enough to keep his heart unbroken while he should be getting it through its various lingering miseries, all I can say is — I decidedly don't know him.

On that horrible Staplehurst day, I had not the slightest idea that I knew any one in the train out of my own compartment. Mrs. Cowden Clarke[1] wrote me afterwards, telling me in the main what you tell me, and I was astonished. It is remarkable that my watch (a special chronometer) has never gone quite correctly since, and to this day there sometimes comes over me, on a railway — in a hansom cab — or any sort of conveyance — for a few seconds, a vague sense of dread that I have no power to check. It comes and passes, but I cannot prevent its coming.

Believe me, always faithfully yours.

DCXLII. W. H. WILLS

Friday, July 31, 1868.

My dear Wills, — I had such a hard day at the office yesterday, that I had not time to write to you before I left. So I write to-day.

I am very unwilling to abandon the Christmas number, though even in the case of my little Christmas books (which were immensely profitable) I let the idea go when I thought it was wearing out. Ever since I came home, I have hammered at it, more or less, and have been uneasy about it. I have begun something which is very droll, but it manifestly shapes itself towards a book, and could not in the least admit of even that shadowy approach to a congruous whole on the part of other contributors which they have ever achieved at the best.

[1] *Mrs. Cowden Clarke wrote to tell Charles Dickens that her sister, Miss Sabilla Novello, and her brother, Mr. Alfred Novello, were also in the train, and escaped without injury.*

I have begun something else (aboard the American mail-steamer); but I don't like it, because the stories must come limping in after the old fashion, though, of course, what I *have* done will be good for "A. Y. R." In short, I have cast about with the greatest pains and patience, and I have been wholly unable to find what I want.

And yet I cannot quite make up my mind to give in without another fight for it. I offered one hundred pounds' reward at Gad's to anybody who could suggest a notion to satisfy me. Charles Collins suggested one yesterday morning, in which there is *something*, though not much. I will turn it over and over, and try a few more starts on my own account. Finally, I swear I will not give it up until August is out. Vow registered.

I am clear that a number by "various writers" would not do. If we have not the usual sort of number, we must call the current number for that date the Christmas number, and make it as good as possible.

I sit in the Châlet,[1] like Mariana in the Moated Grange, and to as much purpose.

I am buying the freehold of the meadow at Gad's, and of an adjoining arable field, so that I shall now have about eight-and-twenty freehold acres in a ring-fence. No more now.

I made up a very good number yesterday. You will see in it a very short article that I have called "Now!" which is a highly remarkable piece of description. It is done by a new man, from whom I have accepted another article; but he will never do anything so good again.

Ever affectionately.

DCXLIII. M. DE CERJAT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, August 26, 1868.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — I was happy to receive your esteemed letter a few days ago.

The severity of the winter in America (which was quite exceptional even in that rigorous climate), combined with the hard work I had to do, tried me a good deal. Neuralgia and colds

[1] A model of a Swiss châlet, and a present from M. Charles Fechter, used by Charles Dickens as a summer writing-room.

beset me, either by turns or both together, and I had often much to do to get through at night. But the sea voyage home again did wonders in restoring me, and I have been very well indeed, though a little fatigued, ever since. I am now preparing for a final reading campaign in England, Scotland, and Ireland. It will begin on the 6th of October, and will probably last, with short occasional intermissions, until June.

The great subject in England for the moment is the horrible accident to the Irish mail-train. It is now supposed that the petroleum (known to be a powerful anæsthetic) rendered the unfortunate people who were burnt almost instantly insensible to any sensation. My escape in the Staplehurst accident of three years ago is not to be obliterated from my nervous system. To this hour I have sudden vague rushes of terror, even when riding in a hansom cab, which are perfectly unreasonable but quite insurmountable. I used to make nothing of driving a pair of horses habitually through the most crowded parts of London. I cannot now drive, with comfort to myself, on the country roads here; and I doubt if I could ride at all in the saddle. My reading secretary and companion knows so well when one of these odd momentary seizures comes upon me in a railway carriage, that he instantly produces a dram of brandy, which rallies the blood to the heart and generally prevails. I forget whether I ever told you that my watch (a chronometer) has never gone exactly since the accident? So the Irish catastrophe naturally revives the dreadful things I saw that day.

The only other news here you know as well as I; to wit, that the country is going to be ruined, and that the Church is going to be ruined, and that both have become so used to being ruined, that they will go on perfectly well.

DCXLIV. MISS DICKENS

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
No. 26, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W. C.,
Saturday, September 26, 1868.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — I will add a line to this at the Athenæum, after seeing Plorn off, to tell you how he went away.

ATHENÆUM, Quarter to Six.

I can honestly report that he went away, poor dear fellow, as well as could possibly be expected. He was pale, and had been crying, and (Harry said) had broken down in the railway carriage after leaving Higham station; but only for a short time.

Just before the train started he cried a good deal, but not painfully. (Tell dear Georgy that I bought him his cigars.) These are hard, hard things, but they might have to be done without means or influence, and then they would be far harder. God bless him!

DCXLV. F. D. FINLAY

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, October 4, 1868.

MY DEAR FINLAY, — I am much obliged to you in all friendship and sincerity for your letter. I have a great respect for your father-in-law and his paper, and I am much attached to the Edinburgh people.[1] You may suppose, therefore, that if my mind were not fully made up on the parliamentary question, I should waver now.

But my conviction that I am more useful and more happy as I am than I could ever be in Parliament is not to be shaken. I considered it some weeks ago, when I had a stirring proposal from the Birmingham people, and I then set it up on a rock for ever and a day.

Do tell Mr. Russel that I truly feel this mark of confidence, and that I hope to acknowledge it in person in Edinburgh before Christmas. There is no man in Scotland from whom I should consider his suggestion a greater honour.

Ever yours.

DCXLVI. CHARLES FECHTER

Poor Plorn is gone to Australia. It was a hard parting at the last. He seemed to me to become once more my youngest and favourite little child as the day drew near, and I did not

[1] Alexander Russel had proposed in *The Scotsman* that Dickens should be a candidate for election to Parliament as representative of Edinburgh.

think I could have been so shaken. You were his idol to the hour of his departure, and he asked me to tell you how much he wanted to bid you good-bye.

Kindest love from all.

Ever heartily.

DCXLVII. CHARLES FECHTER

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Wednesday, October 7, 1868.

MY DEAR FECHTER, — I got your letter sent to Gad's Hill this morning. Until I received it, I supposed the piece to have been put into English from your French by young Ben. If I understand that the English is yours, then I say that it is extraordinarily good, written by one in another country.

I do not read again in London until the 20th; and then "Copperfield." But by that time you will be at work yourself.

Let us dine at six to-day, in order that we may not have to hurry for the comic dog.

Ever faithfully.

DCXLVIII. MISS HOGARTH

QUEEN'S HOTEL, MANCHESTER, Sunday, October 11, 1868.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — We had a fine audience last night in the Free Trade Hall, though not what we consider a large money-house. The let in Liverpool is extremely good, and we are going over there at half-past one. We got down here pleasantly enough and in good time; so all has gone well, you see.

Titiens, Santley, and an opera company of that class are at the theatre here. They have been doing very poorly in Manchester.

There is the whole of my scanty news. I was in wonderful voice last night, but croak a little this morning, after so much speaking in so very large a place. Otherwise I am all right. I *find myself constantly* thinking of Plorn.

DCXLIX. MISS DICKENS

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Monday, October 12, 1868.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — Our lots here are excellent, and we shall have a great house to-night. We had a very fine and enthusiastic audience in the Free Trade Hall, at Manchester, on Saturday; but our first nights there never count up in money, as the rest do. Yesterday, "Charlotte," Sainton, and Piatti stayed with us here; and they went on to Hull this morning. It was pleasant to be alone again, though they were all very agreeable.

The exertion of going on for two hours in that immense place at Manchester being very great, I was hoarse all day yesterday, though I was not much distressed on Saturday night. I am becoming melodious again (at three in the afternoon) rapidly, and count on being quite restored by a basin of turtle at dinner.

I am glad to hear about Armatage, and hope that a service begun in a personal attachment to Plorn may go on well. I shall never be over-confident in such matters, I think, any more.

The day is delicious here. We have had a blow on the Mersey this morning, and exulted over the American steamers. With kind regard to Sir William and Lady Humphery.

DCL. MISS HOGARTH

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Tuesday, October 13, 1868.

As I sent a line to Mary yesterday, I inclose you Alfred's letter. Please send it on to her when you next write to Penton.

I have just now written to Mrs. Forster, asking her to explain to Miss Forster how she could have an easy-chair or a sofa behind my side screen on Tuesday, without occasioning the smallest inconvenience to anybody. Also, how she would have a door close at hand, leading at once to cool passages and a quiet room, etc., etc., etc. It is a sad story.

We had a fine house here last night, and a large turn-away. "Marigold" and "Trial" went immensely. I doubt if "Marigold" were ever more enthusiastically received. "Copperfield"

and "Bob" to-night, and a large let. This notwithstanding election meetings and all sorts of things.

My favourite room brought my voice round last night, and I am in considerable force.

Dolby sends kindest regard, and the message: "Everton toffee shall not be forgotten."

DCLI. HENRY FIELDING DICKENS

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Thursday, October 15, 1868.

MY DEAR HARRY, — I have your letter here this morning. I inclose you another cheque for twenty-five pounds, and I write to London by this post, ordering three dozen sherry, two dozen port, and three dozen light claret, to be sent down to you.

Now, observe attentively. We must have no shadow of debt. Square up everything whatsoever that it has been necessary to buy. Let not a farthing be outstanding on any account, when we begin together with your allowance. Be particular in the minutest detail.

I wish to have no secret from you in the relations we are to establish together, and I therefore send you Joe Chitty's letter bodily. Reading it, you will know exactly what I know, and will understand that I treat you with perfect confidence. It appears to me that an allowance of two hundred and fifty pounds a year will be handsome for all your wants, if I send you your wines. I mean this to include your tailor's bills as well as every other expense; and I strongly recommend you to buy nothing in Cambridge, and to take credit for nothing but the clothes with which your tailor provides you. As soon as you have got your furniture accounts in, let us wipe all those preliminary expenses clean out, and I will then send you your first quarter. We will count in it October, November, and December; and your second quarter will begin with the New Year. If you dislike, at first, taking charge of so large a sum as sixty-two pounds ten shillings, you can have your money from me half quarterly.

You know how hard I work for what I get, and I think you know that I never had money help from any human creature after I was a child. You know that you are one of many heavy charges on me, and that I trust to your so exercising your abilities and improving the advantages of your past expensive

education as soon to diminish *this* charge. I say no more on that head.

Whatever you do, above all other things keep out of debt and confide in me. If you ever find yourself on the verge of any perplexity or difficulty, come to me. You will never find me hard with you while you are manly and truthful.

As your brothers have gone away one by one, I have written to each of them what I am now going to write to you. You know that you have never been hampered with religious forms of restraint, and that with mere unmeaning forms I have no sympathy. But I most strongly and affectionately impress upon you the priceless value of the New Testament, and the study of that book as the one unfailing guide in life. Deeply respecting it, and bowing down before the character of our Saviour, as separated from the vain constructions and inventions of men, you cannot go very wrong, and will always preserve at heart a true spirit of veneration and humility. Similarly I impress upon you the habit of saying a Christian prayer every night and morning. These things have stood by me all through my life, and remember that I tried to render the New Testament intelligible to you and lovable by you when you were a mere baby.

And so God bless you.

Ever your affectionate father.

DCLII. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Monday, November 16, 1868.

MY DEAR KENT, — I was on the eve of writing to you.

We thought of keeping the trial private; but Oxenford has suggested to Chappell that he would like to take the opportunity of to-morrow night's reading, of saying something about "Oliver" in *Wednesday's paper*. Chappell has told Levy of this, and also Mr. Tompkin, of "The Post," who was there. Consequently, on Wednesday evening your charming article can come out to the best advantage.

You have no idea of the difficulty of getting in the end of Sikes. As to the man with the invaluable composition! my dear fellow, believe me, no audience on earth could be held for ten minutes after the girl's death. Give them time, and they

would be revengeful for having had such a strain put upon them. Trust me to be right. I stand there, and I know.

Concerning Harry, I like to guide the boys to a distinct choice, rather than to press it on them. That will be my course as to the Middle Temple, of which I think as you do.

With cordial thanks for every word in your letter,

Affectionately yours always.

DCLIII. MRS. F. LEHMANN

KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH, Sunday, December 6, 1868.

MY DEAR MRS. LEHMANN, — I hope you will see Nancy with the light of a great audience upon her some time between this and May; always supposing that she should not prove too weird and woeful for the general public.

You know the aspect of this city on a Sunday, and how gay and bright it is. The merry music of the blithe bells, the waving flags, the prettily decorated houses with their draperies of various colours, and the radiant countenances at the windows and in the streets, how charming they are! The usual preparations are making for the band in the open air in the afternoon; and the usual pretty children (selected for that purpose) are at this moment hanging garlands round the Scott monument, preparatory to the innocent Sunday dance round that edifice, with which the diversions invariably close. It is pleasant to think that these customs were themselves of the early Christians, those early birds who *did n't* catch the worm — and nothing else — and choke their young with it.

Faithfully yours always.

DCLIV. MISS HOGARTH

KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH, Sunday, December 6, 1868.

We got down here to our time to the moment, and, considering the length of the journey, very easily. I made a calculation on the road, that the railway travelling over such a distance involves something more than thirty thousand shocks to the nerves. Dolby did n't like it at all.

The signals for a gale were up at Berwick, and along the road between there and here. It came on just as we arrived, and blew tremendously hard all night. The wind is still very

…the sky is bright and the sun shining. We …p for the noise.

…very comfortably quartered. I fancy that the … will be on the whole better here than in Glasgow, … is said to be very bad. But I think I shall be …t in both places as to the run being on the final …

…re going up Arthur's Seat presently, which will be a …ll for our fat friend.

Scott, in a new Mephistopheles hat, baffles imagination and description.

DCLV. WILKIE COLLINS

KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH, Tuesday, December 8, 1868.

DEAR WILKIE, — I am hard at it here as usual, … with an audience so finely perceptive that the labour is …uch diminished. I have got together in a very short space …e conclusion of "Oliver Twist" that you suggested, and am trying it daily with the object of rising from that blank state of horror into a fierce and passionate rush for the end. As yet I cannot make a certain effect of it; but when I shall have gone over it as many score of times as over the rest of that reading, perhaps I may strike one out.

I shall be very glad to hear when you have done your play, and I *am* glad to hear that you like the steamer. I agree with you about the reading perfectly. In No. 3 you will see an exact account of some places I visited at Ratcliffe. There are two little instances in it of something comic rising up in the midst of the direst misery, that struck me very humorously at the time.

As I have determined not to do the "Oliver Murder" until after the 5th of January, when I shall ascertain its effect on a great audience, it is curious to notice how the shadow of its coming affects the Scotch mind. There was such a disposition to hold back for it here (until I return to finish in February) that we had next to no "let" when we arrived. It all came with a rush yesterday. They gave me a most magnificent welcome back from America last night.

I am perpetually counting the weeks before me to be "read" through, and am perpetually longing for the end of them; and

yet I sometimes wonder whether I shall miss something when they are over.

It is a very, very bad day here, very dark and very wet. Dolby is over at Glasgow, and I am sitting at a side window looking up the length of Prince's Street, watching the mist change over the Castle and murdering Nancy by turns.

Ever affectionately.

P. S. — I have read the whole of Fitzgerald's "Zero," and the idea is exceedingly well wrought out.

DCLVI. MISS HOGARTH

KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH,
Saturday, December 12, 1868.

I send another "Scotsman" by this post, because it is really a good newspaper, well written, and well managed. We had an immense house here last night, and a very large turn-away.

We have four guests to dinner to-day: Peter Fraser, Ballantyne, John Blackwood, and Mr. Russel. Immense preparations are making in the establishment, "on account," Mr. Kennedy says, "of a' four yon chiels being chiels wha' ken a guid dinner." I inquired after poor Doctor Burt, not having the least idea that he was dead.

My voice holds out splendidly so far, and I have had no return of the "American." But I sleep very indifferently indeed.

It blew appallingly here the night before last, but the wind has since shifted northward, and it is now bright and cold. The Star of Hope, that picked up those shipwrecked people in the boat, came into Leith yesterday, and was received with tremendous cheers. Her captain must be a good man and a noble fellow.

DCLVII. THE SAME

KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH,
Monday, December 14, 1868.

The dinner-party of Saturday last was an immense success. Russel swore on the occasion that he would go over to Belfast expressly to dine with me at the Finlays'. Ballantyne informed

me that he was going to send you some Scotch remembrance (I don't know what) at Christmas!

The Edinburgh houses are very fine. The Glasgow room is a big, wandering place, with five prices in it, which makes it the more aggravating, as the people get into knots which they can't break, as if they were afraid of one another.

Forgery of my name is becoming popular. You sent me, this morning, a letter from Russell Sturgis, answering a supposed letter of mine (presented by "Miss Jefferies"), and assuring me of his readiness to give not only the ten pounds I asked for, but any contribution I wanted towards sending that lady and her family back to Boston.

I wish you would take an opportunity of forewarning Lady Tennent that the first night's reading she will attend is an experiment quite out of the way, and that she may find it rather horrible.

The keeper of the Edinburgh Hall, a fine old soldier, presented me, on Friday night, with the finest red camellia for my button-hole that ever was seen. Nobody can imagine how he came by it, as the florists had had a considerable demand for that colour from ladies in the stalls, and could get no such thing.

The day is dark, wet, and windy. The weather is likely to be vile indeed at Glasgow, where it always rains, and where the sun is never seen through the smoke. We go over there to-morrow at ten.

DCLVIII. MISS DICKENS

CARRICK'S ROYAL HOTEL, GLASGOW,
Tuesday, December 15, 1868.

It occurs to me that my table at St. James's Hall might be appropriately ornamented with a little holly next Tuesday. If the two front legs were entwined with it, for instance, and a border of it ran round the top of the fringe in front, with a little sprig by way of bouquet at each corner, it would present a seasonable appearance.

If you will think of this, and will have the materials ready in a little basket, I will call for you at the office at half-past twelve on Tuesday, and take you up to the hall, where the table will be ready for you.

No news, except that we had a great crush and a wonderful audience in Edinburgh last night.

DCLIX. MISS HOGARTH

CARRICK'S ROYAL HOTEL, GLASGOW,
Wednesday, December 16, 1868.

This is to report all well, except that I have wretched nights. The weather is diabolical here, and times are very bad. I cut "Copperfield" with a bold dexterity that amazed myself and utterly confounded George at the wing; knocking off that and "Bob" by ten minutes to ten.

I don't know anything about the Liverpool banquet, except from the "Times." As I don't finish there in February (as they seem to have supposed), but in April, it may, perhaps, stand over or blow over altogether. Such a thing would be a serious addition to the work, and yet refusal on my part would be too ungracious.

The density and darkness of this atmosphere are fearful. I shall be heartily glad to start for Edinburgh again on Friday morning.

DCLX. MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS

GLASGOW, Wednesday, December 16, 1868.

MY DEAR MRS. FIELDS, — First, as you are curious about the Oliver murder, I will tell you about that trial of the same at which you *ought* to have assisted. There were about a hundred people present in all. I have changed my stage. Besides that back screen which you know so well, there are two large screens of the same colour, set off, one on either side, like the "wings" at a theatre. And besides these again, we have a quantity of curtains of the same colour, with which to close in any width of room from wall to wall. Consequently, the figure is now completely isolated, and the slightest action becomes much more important. This was used for the first time on the occasion. But behind the stage — the orchestra being very large and built for the accommodation of a numerous chorus — there was ready, on the level of the platform, a very long table, beautifully lighted, with a large staff of men ready to open oysters and set champagne-corks flying. Directly I had done, the screens being whisked off by my people, there was disclosed one of the prettiest banquets you can imagine; and

when all the people came up, and the gay dresses of the ladies were lighted by those powerful lights of mine, the scene was exquisitely pretty; the hall being newly decorated, and very elegantly; and the whole looking like a great bed of flowers and diamonds.

Now, you must know that all this company were, before the wine went round, unmistakably pale, and had horror-stricken faces. Next morning Harness (Fields knows — Rev. William — did an edition of Shakespeare — old friend of the Kembles and Mrs. Siddons), writing to me about it, and saying it was "a most amazing and terrific thing," added, "but I am bound to tell you that I had an almost irresistible impulse upon me to *scream*, and that, if any one had cried out, I am certain I should have followed." He had no idea that, on the night, P——, the great ladies' doctor, had taken me aside and said, "My dear Dickens, you may rely upon it that if only one woman cries out when you murder the girl, there will be a contagion of hysteria all over this place." It is impossible to soften it without spoiling it, and you may suppose that I am rather anxious to discover how it goes on the 5th of January!!! We are afraid to announce it elsewhere, without knowing except that

in a certain Uncommercial, and also some small reference to a name rather dear to you? As an instance of how strangely something comic springs up in the midst of the direst misery, look to a succeeding Uncommercial, called "A Small Star in the East," published to-day, by the bye. I have described, *with exactness*, the poor places into which I went, and how the people behaved, and what they said. I was wretched, looking on; and yet the boiler-maker and the poor man with the legs filled me with a sense of drollery not to be kept down by any pressure.

The atmosphere of this place, compounded of mists from the highlands and smoke from the town factories, is crushing my eyebrows as I write, and it rains as it never does rain anywhere else, and always does rain here. It is a dreadful place, though much improved and possessing a deal of public spirit. Improvement is beginning to knock the old town of Edinburgh about, here and there; but the Canongate and the most picturesque of the horrible courts and wynds are not to be easily spoiled, or made fit for the poor wretches who people them to live in. Edinburgh is so changed as to its notabilities, that I had the only three men left of the Wilson and Jeffrey time to dine with me there, last Saturday.

I think you will find "Fatal Zero" (by Percy Fitzgerald) a very curious analysis of a mind, as the story advances. A new beginner in "A. Y. R." (Hon. Mrs. Clifford, Kinglake's sister), who wrote a story in the series just finished, called "The Abbot's Pool," has just sent me another story. I have a strong impression that, with care, she will step into Mrs. Gaskell's vacant place. Wills is no better, and I have work enough even in that direction.

God bless the woman with the black mittens for making me laugh so this morning! I take her to be a kind of public-spirited Mrs. Sparsit, and as such take her to my bosom. God bless you both, my dear friends, in this Christmas and New Year time, and in all times, seasons, and places, and send you to Gad's Hill with the next flowers!

Ever your most affectionate.

DCLXI. MISS HOGARTH

KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH, Friday, December 18, 1868.

I am heartily glad to get back here this afternoon. The day is bright and cheerful, and the relief from Glasgow inexpressible. The affectionate regard of the people exceeds all bounds, and is shown in every way. The manager of the railway being at the reading the other night, wrote to me next morning, saying that a large saloon should be prepared for my journey up, if I would let him know when I purposed making the journey. On my accepting the offer he wrote again, saying that he had inspected "our Northern saloons," and, not finding them so convenient for sleeping in as the best English, had sent up to King's Cross for the best of the latter; which I would please consider my own carriage as long as I wanted it. The audiences do everything but embrace me, and take as much pains with the readings as I do.

I find your Christmas present (just arrived) to be a haggis and shortbread!

Charles Dickens in 1858

DCLXI. MISS HOGARTH

KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH, Friday, December 18, 1868.

I am heartily glad to get back here this afternoon. The day is bright and cheerful, and the relief from Glasgow inexpressible. The affectionate regard of the people exceeds all bounds, and is shown in every way. The manager of the railway being at the reading the other night, wrote to me next morning, saying that a large saloon should be prepared for my journey up, if I would let him know when I purposed making the journey. On my accepting the offer he wrote again, saying that he had inspected "our Northern saloons," and, not finding them so convenient for sleeping in as the best English, had sent up to King's Cross for the best of the latter; which I would please consider my own carriage as long as I wanted it. The audiences do everything but embrace me, and take as much pains with the readings as I do.

I find your Christmas present (just arrived) to be a haggis and shortbread!

DCLXII. J. C. PARKINSON

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT, Christmas Day, 1868.

MY DEAR PARKINSON, — When your letter was delivered at "All the Year Round" Office yesterday, I was attending a funeral. It comes to hand here consequently to-day.

I am diffident of addressing Mr. Gladstone on the subject of your desire to be appointed to the vacant Commissionership of Inland Revenue, because, although my respect for him and confidence in him are second to those of no man in England (a bold word at this time, but a truthful one), my personal acquaintance with him is very slight. But you may make, through any of your friends, any use you please of this letter, towards the end of bringing its contents under Mr. Gladstone's notice.

In expressing my conviction that you deserve the place, and are in every way qualified for it, I found my testimony upon as accurate a knowledge of your character and abilities as any one can possibly have acquired. In my editorship both of "House-

hold Words" and "All the Year Round," you know very well that I have invariably offered you those subjects of political and social interest to write upon, in which integrity, exactness, a remarkable power of generalising evidence and balancing facts, and a special clearness in stating the case, were indispensable on the part of the writer. My confidence in your powers has never been misplaced, and through all our literary intercourse you have never been hasty or wrong. Whatever trust you have undertaken has been so completely discharged, that it has become my habit to read your proofs rather for my own edification than (as in other cases) for the detection of some slip here or there, or the more pithy presentation of the subject.

That your literary work has never interfered with the discharge of your official duties, I may assume to be at least as well known to your colleagues as it is to me. It is idle to say that if the post were in my gift you should have it, because you have had, for some years, most of the posts of high trust that have been at my disposal. An excellent public servant in your literary sphere of action, I should be heartily glad if you could have this new opportunity of distinguishing yourself in the same character. And this is at least unselfish in me, for I suppose I should then lose you?

Always faithfully yours.

DCLXIII. EDWARD BULWER LYTTON DICKENS

My dearest Plorn, — I write this note to-day because your going away[1] is much upon my mind, and because I want you to have a few parting words from me to think of now and then at quiet times. I need not tell you that I love you dearly, and am very, very sorry in my heart to part with you. But this life is half made up of partings, and these pains must be borne. It is my comfort and my sincere conviction that you are going to try the life for which you are best fitted. I think its freedom and wildness more suited to you than any experiment in a study or office would ever have been; and without that training, you could have followed no other suitable occupation.

What you have already wanted until now has been a set, steady, *constant purpose.* I therefore exhort you to persevere

[1] To Australia.

in (gh determination to do whatever you have to do as w... ...s yo... can do it. I was not so old as you are now when I first had to win my food, and do this out of this determination, and I have never slackened in it since.

Never take a mean advantage of any one in any transaction, and never be hard upon people who are in your power. Try to do to others as you would have them do to you, and do not be discouraged if they fail sometimes. It is much better for you that they should fail in obeying the greatest rule laid down by our Saviour than that you should.

I put a New Testament among your books, for the very same reasons, and with the very same hopes, that made me write an easy account of it for you, when you were a little child; because it is the best book that ever was or will be known in the world, and because it teaches you the best lessons by which any human creature who tries to be truthful and faithful to duty can possibly be guided. As your brothers have gone away, one by one, I have written to each such words as I am now writing to you, and have entreated them all to guide themselves by this book, putting aside the interpretations and inventions of men.

You will remember that you have never at home been wearied about religious observances or mere formalities. I have always been anxious not to weary my children with such things before they are old enough to form opinions respecting them. You will therefore understand the better that I now most solemnly impress upon you the truth and beauty of the Christian religion, as it came from Christ Himself, and the impossibility of your going far wrong if you humbly but heartily respect it.

Only one thing more on this head. The more we are in earnest as to feeling it, the less we are disposed to hold forth about it. Never abandon the wholesome practice of saying your own private prayers, night and morning. I have never abandoned it myself, and I know the comfort of it.

I hope you will always be able to say in after life, that you had a kind father. You cannot show your affection for him so well, or make him so happy, as by doing your duty.

Your affectionate father.

DCLXIV. F. D. FINLAY

THE ATHENÆUM [CLUB], New Year's Day, 1869.

MY DEAR FINLAY, — First my heart-felt wishes for many prosperous and happy years. Next, as to the mayor's kind intentions. I feel really grateful to him and gratified by the whole idea, but acceptance of the distinction on my part would be impracticable. My time in Ireland is all anticipated, and I could not possibly prolong my stay, because I *must* be back in London to read on Tuesday fortnight, and then must immediately set forth for the West of England. It is not likely, besides, that I shall get through these farewells before the end of May. And the work is so hard, and my voice is so precious, that I fear to add an ounce to the fatigue, or I might be overweighted. The avoidance of gas and crowds when I am not in the act of being cooked before those lights of mine, is an essential part of the training to which (as I think you know) I strictly adhere, and although I have accepted the Liverpool invitation, I have done so as an exception; the Liverpool people having always treated me in our public relations with a kind of personal affection.

I am sincerely anxious that the Mayor of Belfast should know how the case stands with me. If you will kindly set me straight and right, I shall be truly obliged to you.

My sister-in-law has been very unwell (though she is now much better), and is recommended a brisk change. As she is a good sailor, I mean to bring her to Ireland with me; at which she is highly delighted.

Faithfully yours ever.

DCLXV. M. DE CERJAT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, January 4, 1869.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — I will answer your question first. Have I done with my farewell readings? Lord bless you, no; and I shall think myself well out of it if I get done by the end of May. I have undertaken one hundred and six, and have as yet only vanquished twenty-eight. To-morrow night I read in London for the first time the "Murder" from "Oliver Twist,"

which I have rearranged for the purpose. Next day I start for Dublin and Belfast. I am just back from Scotland for a few Christmas holidays. I go back there next month; and in the mean time and afterwards go everywhere else.

Take my guarantee for it, you may be quite comfortable on the subject of papal aspirations and encroachments. The English people are in unconquerable opposition to that church. They have the animosity in the blood, derived from the history of the past, though perhaps unconsciously. But they do sincerely want to win Ireland over if they can. They know that since the Union she has been hardly used. They know that Scotland has *her* religion, and a very uncomfortable one. They know that Scotland, though intensely anti-papal, perceives it to be unjust that Ireland has not *her* religion too, and has very emphatically declared her opinion in the late elections. They know that a richly endowed church, forced upon a people who don't belong to it, is a grievance with these people. They know that many things, but especially an artfully and schemingly managed institution like the Romish Church, thrive upon a grievance, and that Rome has thriven exceedingly upon this, and made the most of it. Lastly, the best among them know that there is a gathering cloud in the West, considerably bigger than a man's hand, under which a powerful Irish-American body, rich and active, is always drawing Ireland in that direction; and that these are not times in which other powers would back our holding Ireland by force, unless we could make our claim good in proving fair and equal government.

Poor Townshend charged me in his will "to publish without alteration his religious opinions, which he sincerely believed would tend to the happiness of mankind." To publish them without alteration is absolutely impossible; for they are distributed in the strangest fragments through the strangest note-books, pocket-books, slips of paper and what not, and produce a most incoherent and tautological result. I infer that he must have held some always-postponed idea of fitting them together. For these reasons I would certainly publish nothing about them, if I had any discretion in the matter. Having none, I suppose a book must be made. His pictures and rings are gone to the South Kensington Museum, and are now exhibiting there.

Charley Collins is no better and no worse. Katie looks very young and very pretty. Her sister and Miss Hogarth (my joint

housekeepers) have been on duty this Christmas, and have had enough to do. My boys are now all dispersed in South America, India, and Australia, except Charley, whom I have taken on at "All the Year Round" Office, and Henry, who is an undergraduate at Trinity Hall, and I hope will make his mark there. All well.

The Thames Embankment is (faults of ugliness in detail apart) the finest public work yet done. From Westminster Bridge to near Waterloo it is now lighted up at night, and has a fine effect. They have begun to plant it with trees, and the footway (not the road) is already open to the Temple. Besides its beauty, and its usefulness in relieving the crowded streets, it will greatly quicken and deepen what is learnedly called the "scour" of the river. But the Corporation of London and some other nuisances have brought the weirs above Twickenham into a very bare and unsound condition, and they already begin to give and vanish, as the stream runs faster and stronger.

Your undersigned friend has had a few occasional reminders of his "true American catarrh." Although I have exerted my voice very much, it has not yet been once touched. In America I was obliged to patch it up constantly.

I like to read your patriarchal account of yourself among your Swiss vines and fig-trees. You would n't recognise Gad's Hill now; I have so changed it, and bought land about it. And yet I often think that if Mary were to marry (which she won't) I should sell it and go genteelly vagabondising over the face of the earth. Then indeed I might see Lausanne again. But I don't seem in the way of it at present, for the older I get, the more I do and the harder I work.

Yours ever affectionately.

DCLXVI. MISS MARY BOYLE

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Wednesday, January 6, 1869.

MY DEAR MARY, — I was more affected than you can easily believe, by the sight of your gift lying on my dressing-table on the morning of the new year. To be remembered in a friend's heart when it is sore is a touching thing; and that and the remembrance of the dead quite overpowered me, the one being inseparable from the other.

You may be sure that I shall attach a special interest and value to the beautiful present, and shall wear it as a kind of charm. God bless you, and may we carry the friendship through many coming years!

My preparations for a certain murder that I had to do last night have rendered me unfit for letter-writing these last few days, or you would have heard from me sooner. The crime being completely off my mind and the blood spilled, I am (like many of my fellow-criminals) in a highly edifying state to-day.

Ever believe me, your affectionate friend.

DCLXVII. MISS DICKENS

TORQUAY, Wednesday, January 27, 1869.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — We have been doing immensely.

This place is most beautiful, though colder now than one would expect. This hotel, an immense place, built among picturesque broken rocks out in the blue sea, is quite delicious. There are bright green trees in the garden, and new peas a foot high. Our rooms are *en suite*, all commanding the sea, and each with two very large plate-glass windows. Everything good and well served.

A pantomime was being done last night, in the place where I am to read to-night. It is something between a theatre, a circus, a riding-school, a Methodist chapel, and a cow-house. I was so disgusted with its acoustic properties on going in to look at it, that the whole unfortunate staff have been all day, and now are, sticking up baize and carpets in it to prevent echoes.

I have rarely seen a more uncomfortable edifice than I thought it last night.

At Clifton, on Monday night, we had a contagion of fainting. And yet the place was not hot. I should think we had from a dozen to twenty ladies borne out, stiff and rigid, at various times. It became quite ridiculous.

DCLXVIII. MISS HOGARTH

BATH, Friday, January 29, 1869.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — You must not trust blank places in my list, because many have been, and will be, gradually

filled up. After the Tuesday's reading in London, I have TWO for that same week in the country — Nottingham and Leicester. In the following week I have none; but my arrangements are all at sea yet, for I must somehow do an "Uncommercial" in that week, and I also want to get poor Chauncey's "opinions" to the printer.

This mouldy old roosting-place comes out mouldily as to let, of course. I hate the sight of the bygone assembly rooms, and the Bath chairs trundling the dowagers about the streets. As to to-morrow morning in the daylight! —

I have no cold to speak of. Dolby sends kindest regard.

DCLXIX. MRS. LEHMANN

OFFICE, Wednesday, February 3, 1869.

DEAR MRS. LEHMANN, — Before getting your kind note, I had written to Lehmann, explaining why I cannot allow myself any social pleasure while my farewell task is yet unfinished. The work is so very hard, that every little scrap of rest *and silence* I can pick up is precious. And even those morsels are so flavoured with "All the Year Round," that they are not quite the genuine article.

Joachim[1] came round to see me at the hall last night, and I told him how sorry I was to forego the pleasure of meeting him (he is a noble fellow!) at your pleasant table.

I am glad you are coming to the "Murder" on the 2d of March. (The house will be prodigious.) Such little changes as I have made shall be carefully presented to your critical notice, and I hope will be crowned with your approval. But you are always such a fine audience that I have no fear on that head. I saw Chorley yesterday in his own room. A sad and solitary sight. The widowed Drake, with a certain *gin*-coherence of manner, presented a blooming countenance and buxom form in the passage; so buxom, indeed, that she was obliged to retire before me like a modest stopper, before I could get into the dining decanter where poor Chorley reposed.

Faithfully yours always.

P. S. — My love to Rudie.

[1] Herr Joseph Joachim, the renowned violinist.

DCLXX. MISS HOGARTH

GLASGOW, Thursday, February 25, 1869.

I received your letter at Edinburgh this morning. I did not write to you yesterday, as there had been no reading on the previous night.

The foot bears the fatigue wonderfully well, and really occasions me no inconvenience beyond the necessity of wearing the big work of art. Syme saw me again this morning, and utterly scouted the gout notion altogether. I think the Edinburgh audience understood the "Murder" better last night than any audience that has heard it yet. "Business" is enormous, and Dolby jubilant.

It is a most deplorable afternoon here, deplorable even for Glasgow. A great wind blowing, and sleet driving before it in a storm of heavy blobs. We had to drive our train dead in the teeth of the wind, and got in here late, and are pressed for time.

Strange that in the North we have had absolutely no snow. There was a very thin scattering on the Pentlands for an hour or two, but no more.

DCLXXI. THE SAME

EDINBURGH, Friday, February 26, 1869.

Writing to-morrow morning would be all but impracticable for me; would be quite so for Dolby, who has to go to the agents and "settle up" in the midst of his breakfast. So I write to-day, in reply to your note received at Glasgow this morning.

The foot conducts itself splendidly. We had a most enormous cram at Glasgow. Syme saw me again yesterday (before I left here for Glasgow), and repeated "Gout!" with the greatest indignation and contempt, several times. The aching is going off as the day goes on, if it be worth mentioning again. The ride from Glasgow was charming this morning; the sun shining brilliantly, and the country looking beautiful.

I told you what the Nortons were. Mabel Lowell is a charming little thing, and very retiring in manner and expression.

We shall have a scene here to-night, no doubt. The night before last, Ballantyne, unable to get in, had a seat behind the screen, and was nearly frightened off it by the "Murder." Every vestige of colour had left his face when I came off, and he sat staring over a glass of champagne in the wildest way. I have utterly left off *my* champagne, and I think, with good results. Nothing during the readings but a very little weak iced brandy and water.

I hope you will find me greatly improved on Tuesday.

DCLXXII. MISS DICKENS

Birmingham, Friday, March 5, 1869.

This is to send you my best love, and to wish you many and many happy returns of to-morrow, which I miraculously remember to be your birthday.

I saw this morning a very pretty fan here. I was going to buy it as a remembrance of the occasion, when I was checked by a dim misgiving that you had a fan not long ago from Chorley. Tell me what you would like better, and consider me your debtor in that article, whatever it may be.

I have had my usual left boot on this morning, and have had an hour's walk. It was in a gale of wind and a simoom of dust, but I greatly enjoyed it. Immense enthusiasm at Wolverhampton last night over "Marigold." Scott made a most amazing ass of himself yesterday. He reported that he had left behind somewhere three books — "Boots," "Murder," and "Gamp." We immediately telegraphed to the office. Answer, no books there. As my impression was that he must have left them at St. James's Hall, we then arranged to send him up to London at seven this morning. Meanwhile (though not reproached), he wept copiously and audibly. I had asked him over and over again, was he sure he had not put them in my large black trunk? Too sure, too sure. Had n't opened that trunk after Tuesday night's reading. He opened it to get some clothes out when I went to bed, and there the books were! He produced them with an air of injured surprise, as if we had put them *there*.

DCLXXIII. MISS HOGARTH

QUEEN'S HOTEL, MANCHESTER, Sunday, March 7, 1869.

We have had our sitting-room chimney afire this morning, and have had to turn out elsewhere to breakfast; but the chamber has since been cleaned up, and we are reinstated. Manchester is (*for* Manchester) bright and fresh.

Tell Russell that a crop of hay is to be got off the meadow this year, before the club use it. They did not make such use of it last year as reconciles me to losing another hay-crop. So they must wait until the hay is in, before they commence active operations.

Poor Olliffe! I am truly sorry to read those sad words about his suffering, and fear that the end is not far off.

We are comfortably housed here, and certainly that immense hall is a wonderful place for its size. Without much greater expenditure of voice than usual, I a little enlarged the action last night, and Dolby (who went to all the distant points of view) reported that he could detect no difference between it and any other place. As always happens now — and did not at first — they were unanimously taken by Noah Claypole's laugh. But the go, throughout, was enormous. Sims Reeves was doing Henry Bertram at the theatre, and of course took some of our shillings. It was a night of excitement for Cottonopolis.

I received from Mrs. Keeley this morning a very good photograph of poor old Bob. Yesterday I had a letter from Harry, reminding me that our intended Cambridge day is the day next after that of the boat race. Clearly it must be changed.

DCLXXIV. MRS. JOHN FORSTER

QUEEN'S HOTEL, MANCHESTER,
Monday, March 8, 1869.

MY DEAR MRS. FORSTER, — A thousand thanks for your note, which has reached me here this afternoon. At breakfast this morning Dolby showed me the local paper with a paragraph in it recording poor dear Tennent's[1] death. You may imagine how shocked I was. Immediately before I left town this last

[1] Sir James Emerson Tennent.

time, I had an unusually affectionate letter from him, inclosing one from Forster, and proposing the friendly dinner since appointed for the 25th. I replied to him in the same spirit, and felt touched at the time by the gentle earnestness of his tone. It is remarkable that I talked of him a great deal yesterday to Dolby (who knew nothing of him), and that I reverted to him again at night before going to bed — with no reason that I know of. Dolby was strangely impressed by this when he showed me the newspaper.

God be with us all!

Ever your affectionate.

DCLXXV. A. H. LAYARD

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Saturday, March 13, 1869.

MY DEAR LAYARD, — Coming to town for a couple of days, from York, I find your beautiful present.[1] With my heartiest congratulations on your marriage, accept my most cordial thanks for a possession that I shall always prize foremost among my worldly goods; firstly, for your sake; secondly, for its own.

Not one of these glasses shall be set on table until Mrs. Layard is there, to touch with her lips the first champagne that any of them shall ever hold! This vow has been registered in solemn triumvirate at Gad's Hill.

The first week in June will about see me through my present work, I hope. I came to town hurriedly to attend poor dear Emerson Tennent's funeral. You will know how my mind went back, in the York up-train at midnight, to Mount Vesuvius and our Neapolitan supper.

I have given Mr. Hills, of Oxford Street, the letter of introduction to you that you kindly permitted. He has immense local influence, and could carry his neighbours in favour of any good design.

My dear Layard, ever cordially yours.

[1] Some Venetian glass champagne tumblers.

DCLXXVI. MISS FLORENCE OLLIFFE

26, Wellington Street, Tuesday, March 16, 1869.

My dear Florence,[1] — I have received your kind note this morning, and I hasten to thank you for it, and to assure your dear mother of our most cordial sympathy with her in her great affliction, and in loving remembrance of the good man and excellent friend we have lost. The tidings of his being very ill indeed had, of course, been reported to me. For some days past I had taken up the newspaper with sad misgivings; and this morning, before I got your letter, they were realised.

I loved him truly. His wonderful gentleness and kindness, years ago, when we had sickness in our household in Paris, has never been out of my grateful remembrance. And socially, his image is inseparable from some of the most genial and delightful friendly hours of my life. I am almost ashamed to set such recollections by the side of your mother's great bereavement and grief, but they spring out of the fulness of my heart.

May God be with her and with you all!

Ever yours affectionately.

DCLXXVII. MISS HOGARTH

Queen's Hotel, Manchester, Saturday, March 20, 1869.

Getting yours and its inclosure, Mary's note, at two this afternoon, I write a line at once in order that you may have it on Monday morning.

The Theatre Royal, Liverpool, will be a charming place to read in. Ladies are to dine at the dinner, and we hear it is to be a very grand affair. Dolby is doubtful whether it may not "hurt the business," by drawing a great deal of money in another direction, which I think possible enough. Trade is very bad *here*, and the gloom of the Preston strike seems to brood over the place. The Titiens Company have been doing wretchedly. I should have a greater sympathy with them if they were not practising in the next room now.

[illegible] love to Letitia and Harriette,[2] wherein Dolby (highly gratified by being held in remembrance) joins with the same to you.

[1] Florence Olliffe, who wrote to announce the death of her father, Sir [illegible] Olliffe.

[2] His sister-in-law, Mrs. Augustus Dickens, always a welcome visitor at Gad's Hill.

DCLXXVIII. MISS HOGARTH

MANCHESTER, Sunday, March 21, 1869.

Will you tell Mary that I have had a letter from Frith, in which he says that he will be happy to show her his pictures "any day in the first week of April"? I have replied that she will be proud to receive his invitation. His object in writing was to relieve his mind about the "Murder," of which he cannot say enough.

Tremendous enthusiasm here last night, calling in the most thunderous manner after "Marigold," and again after the "Trial," shaking the great hall, and cheering furiously.

Love to all.

DCLXXIX. THE SAME

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Sunday, April 4, 1869.

By this post I send to Mary the truly affecting account of poor dear Katie Macready's death. It is as sorrowful as anything so peaceful and trustful can be!

Both my feet are very tender, and often feel as though they were in hot water. But I was wonderfully well and strong, thank God! and had no end of voice for the two nights running in that great Birmingham hall. We had enormous houses.

So far as I understand the dinner arrangements here, they are much too long. As to the acoustics of that hall, and the position of the tables (both as bad as bad can be), my only consolation is that, if anybody can be heard, *I* probably can be. The honorary secretary tells me that six hundred people are to dine. The mayor, being no speaker and out of health besides, hands over the toast of the evening to Lord Dufferin. The town is full of the festival. The Theatre Royal, touched up for the occasion, will look remarkably bright and well for the readings, and our lets are large. It is remarkable that our largest let as yet is for Thursday, not Friday. I infer that the dinner damages Friday, but Dolby does not think so. There appears to be great curiosity to hear the "Murder." (On Friday night last I read to two thousand people, and odd hundreds.)

I hear that Anthony Trollope, Dixon, Lord Houghton, Lemon, Esquiros (of the "Revue des Deux Mondes"), and Sala,

are to be called upon to speak; the last, for the newspaper press. All the Liverpool notabilities are to muster. And Manchester is to be represented by its mayor with due formality.

I had been this morning to look at St. George's Hall, and suggest what can be done to improve its acoustics. As usually happens in such cases, their most important arrangements are already made and unchangeable. I should not have placed the tables in the committee's way at all, and could certainly have placed the dais to much greater advantage. So all the good I could do was to show where banners could be hung with some hope of stopping echoes. Such is my small news, soon exhausted. We arrived here at three yesterday afternoon; it is now mid-day; Chorley has not yet appeared, but he had called at the local agent's while I was at Birmingham.

It is a curious little instance of the way in which things fit together that there is a ship of war in the Mersey, whose flags and so forth are to be brought up to St. George's Hall for the dinner. She is the Donegal, of which Paynter told me he had just been captain, when he told me all about Sydney at Bath.

One of the pleasantest things I have experienced here this time is the manner in which I am stopped in the streets by working men, who want to shake hands with me, and tell me they know my books. I never go out but this happens. Down at the docks just now, a cooper with a fearful stutter presented himself in this way. His modesty, combined with a conviction that if he were in earnest I would see it and would n't repel him, made up as true a piece of natural politeness as I ever saw.

DCLXXX. JAMES T. FIELDS

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Friday, April 9, 1869.

MY DEAR FIELDS, — The faithful Russia will bring this out to you, as a sort of warrant to take you into loving custody and bring you back on her return trip.

I rather think that when the 12th of June shall have shaken me shackles,[1] there *will* be borage on the lawn at Gad's. heart's desire in that matter, and in the minor particu- Cobham Park, Rochester Castle, and Canterbury, shall ed, please God! The red jackets shall turn out again turnpike-road, and picnics among the cherry-orchards

[1] The readings.

and hop-gardens shall be heard of in Kent. Then, too, shall the Uncommercial resuscitate (being at present nightly murdered by Mr. W. Sikes) and uplift his voice again.

The chief officer of the Russia (a capital fellow) was at the Reading last night, and Dolby specially charged him with the care of you and yours. We shall be on the borders of Wales, and probably about Hereford, when you arrive. Dolby has insane projects of getting over here to meet you; so amiably hopeful and obviously impracticable, that I encourage him to the utmost. The regular little captain of the Russia, Cook, is just now changed into the Cuba, whence arise disputes of seniority, etc. I wish he had been with you, for I liked him very much when I was his passenger. I like to think of your being in *my* ship!

—— and —— have been taking it by turns to be "on the point of death," and have been complimenting one another greatly on the fineness of the point attained. My people got a very good impression of ——, and thought her a sincere and earnest little woman.

The Russia hauls out into the stream to-day, and I fear her people may be too busy to come to us to-night. But if any of them do, they shall have the warmest of welcomes for your sake. (By the bye, a very good party of seamen from the queen's ship Donegal, lying in the Mersey, have been told off to decorate St. George's Hall with the ship's bunting. They were all hanging on aloft upside down, holding to the gigantically high roof by nothing, this morning, in the most wonderfully cheerful manner.)

My son Charley has come for the dinner, and Chappell (my Proprietor, as — is n't it Wemmick? — says) is coming to-day, and Lord Dufferin (Mrs. Norton's nephew) is to come and make *the* speech. I don't envy the feelings of my noble friend when he sees the hall. Seriously, it is less adapted to speaking than Westminster Abbey, and is as large. . . .

I hope you will see Fechter in a really clever piece by Wilkie. Also you will see the Academy Exhibition, which will be a very good one; and also we will, please God, see everything and more, and everything else after that. I begin to doubt and fear on the subject of your having a horror of me after seeing the murder. I don't think a hand moved while I was doing it last night, or an eye looked away. And there was a fixed

expression of horror of me, all over the theatre, which could not have been surpassed if I had been going to be hanged to that red velvet table. It is quite a new sensation to be execrated with that unanimity; and I hope it will remain so!

[Is it lawful — would that woman in the black gaiters, green veil, and spectacles, hold it so — to send my love to the pretty M——?]

Pack up, my dear Fields, and be quick.

Ever your most affectionate.

DCLXXXI. MISS HOGARTH

IMPERIAL HOTEL, BLACKPOOL, Wednesday, April 21, 1869.

I send you this hasty line to let you know that I have come to this sea-beach hotel (charming) for a day's rest. I am much better than I was on Sunday, but shall want careful looking to, to get through the readings. My weakness and deadness are all *on the left side*, and if I don't look at anything I try to touch with my left hand, I don't know where it is. I am in (secret) consultation with Frank Beard; he recognises, in the exact description I have given him, indisputable evidences of overwork, which he would wish to treat immediately. So I have said, "Go in and win."

I have had a delicious walk by the sea to-day, and I sleep soundly, and have picked up amazingly in appetite. My foot is greatly better too, and I wear my own boot.

DCLXXXII. MISS DICKENS

PRESTON, Thursday Evening, April 22, 1869.

Don't be in the least alarmed. Beard has come down, and instantly echoes my impression (perfectly unknown to him), that the readings must be *stopped*. I have had symptoms that must not be disregarded. I go to Liverpool to-night with him (to get away from here), and proceed to the office to-morrow.

DCLXXXIII. JOHN FORSTER

PRESTON, April 22, 1869.

Don't say anything about it, but the tremendously severe nature of this work is a little shaking me. At Chester last

Sunday I found myself extremely giddy, and extremely uncertain of my sense of touch, both in the left leg and the left hand and arm. I had been taking some slight medicine of Beard's; and immediately wrote to him describing exactly what I felt, and asking him whether those feelings *could be* referable to the medicine? He promptly replied, "There can be no mistaking them from your exact account. The medicine cannot possibly have caused them. I recognise indisputable symptoms of overwork, and I wish to take you in hand without any loss of time." They have greatly modified since, but he is coming down here this afternoon. To-morrow night at Warrington I shall have but twenty-five more nights to work through. If he can coach me up for them, I do not doubt that I shall get all right again — as I did when I became free in America. The foot has given me very little trouble. Yet it is remarkable that it is *the left foot too;* and that I told Henry Thompson (before I saw his old master Syme) that I had an inward conviction that whatever it was, it was not gout. I also told Beard, a year after the Staplehurst accident, that I was certain that my heart had been fluttered, and wanted a little helping. This the stethoscope confirmed; and considering the immense exertion I am undergoing, and the constant jarring of express trains, the case seems to me quite intelligible. Don't say anything in the Gad's direction about my being a little out of sorts. I have broached the matter of course; but very lightly. Indeed, there is no reason for broaching it otherwise.

DCLXXXIV. MR. RUSDEN

PRESTON, Thursday, April 22, 1869.

MY DEAR SIR, — I am finishing my Farewell Readings, — to-night is the seventy-fourth out of one hundred, — and have barely time to send you a line to thank you most heartily for yours of the 30th January, and for your great kindness to Alfred and Edward. The latter wrote by the same mail, on behalf of both, expressing the warmest gratitude to you, and reporting himself in the stoutest heart and hope. I never can thank you sufficiently.

You will see that the new Ministry has made a decided hit with its Budget, and that in the matter of the Irish Church it has the country at its back. You will also see that the

"Reform League" has dissolved itself, indisputably because it became aware that the people did not want it.

I think the general feeling in England is a desire to get the Irish Church out of the way of many social reforms, and to have it done *with* as already done *for*. I do not in the least believe myself that agrarian Ireland is to be pacified by any such means, or can have it got out of its mistaken head that the land is of right the peasantry's, and that every man who owns land has stolen it and is therefore to be shot. But that is not the question.

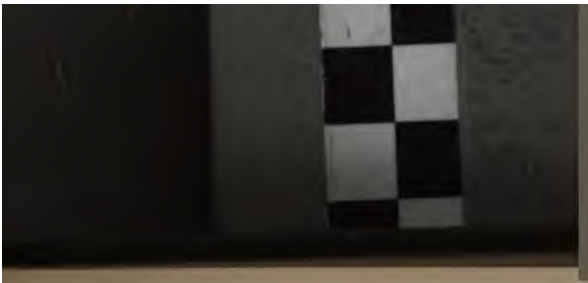
The clock strikes post-time as I write, and I fear to write more, lest, at this distance from London, I should imperil the next mail.

Cordially yours.

DCLXXXV. THOMAS CHAPPELL

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Monday, May 3, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPPELL, — I am really touched by your letter. I can most truthfully assure you that your part in the



Just as three days' repose on the Atlantic steamer made me, in my altered appearance, the amazement of the captain, so this last week has set me up, thank God, in the most wonderful manner. The sense of exhaustion seems a dream already. Of course I shall train myself carefully, nevertheless, all through the summer and autumn.

I beg to send my kind regards to Mrs. Chappell, and I shall hope to see her and you at Teddington in the long bright days. It would disappoint me indeed if a lasting friendship did not come of our business relations.

In the spring I trust I shall be able to report to you that I am ready to take my Farewells in London. Of this I am pretty certain: that I never will take them at all, unless with you on your own conditions.

With an affectionate regard for you and your brother, believe me always,

Very faithfully yours.

DCLXXXVI. MR. RUSDEN

"All the Year Round," Office,
Tuesday, May 18, 1869.

My dear Mr. Rusden, — As I dare say some exaggerated accounts of my having been very ill have reached you, I begin with the true version of the case.

I dare say I *should* have been very ill if I had not suddenly stopped my Farewell Readings when there were yet five-and-twenty remaining to be given. I was quite exhausted, and was warned by the doctors to stop (for the time) instantly. Acting on the advice, and going home into Kent for rest, I immediately began to recover, and within a fortnight was in the brilliant condition in which I can now — thank God — report myself.

I cannot thank you enough for your care of Plorn. I was quite prepared for his not settling down without a lurch or two. I still hope that he may take to colonial life. . . . In his letter to me about his leaving the station to which he got through your kindness, he expresses his gratitude to you quite as *strongly as if he had* made a wonderful success, and seems to *have acquired no distaste* for anything but the one individual of *whom he wrote that* betrayed letter. But knowing the boy, I *want to try him fully.*

o all our public news, such as it is, at least as well a so. My people here (of whom I am one) do not like the look of American matters.

What I most fear is that the perpetual bluster of a party in States will at last set the patient British back up. And our people begin to bluster too, and there should come into stence an exasperating war-party on both sides, there will be great danger of a daily widening breach.

The first shriek of the first engine that traverses the San Francisco Railroad from end to end will be a death warning to the disciples of Jo Smith. The moment the Mormon bubble gets touched by neighbours it will break. Similarly, the red man's course is very nearly run. A scalped stoker is the outward and visible sign of his utter extermination. Not Quakers enough to reach from here to Jerusalem will save him by the term of a single year.

I don't know how it may be with you, but it is the fashion here to be absolutely certain that the Emperor of the French is fastened by Providence and the fates on a throne of adamant expressly constructed for him since the foundations of the universe were laid.

He knows better, and so do the police of Paris, and both powers must be grimly entertained by the resolute British belief, knowing what they have known, and doing what they have done through the last ten years. What Victor Hugo calls "the drop-curtain, behind which is constructing the great last act of the French Revolution," has been a little shaken at the bottom lately, however. One seems to see the feet of a rather large chorus getting ready.

I inclose a letter for Plorn to your care, not knowing how to address him. Forgive me for so doing (I write to Alfred direct), and believe me, my dear Mr. Rusden,

Yours faithfully and much obliged.

DCLXXXVII. LORD JOHN RUSSELL

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, May 26, 1869.

MY DEAR LORD RUSSELL, — I have delayed answering our kind letter, in order that you might get home before I wrote. I am happy to report myself quite well again, and I

shall be charmed to come to Pembroke Lodge on any day that may be most convenient to Lady Russell and yourself after the middle of June.

You gratify me beyond expression by your reference to the Liverpool dinner. I made the allusion to you with all my heart at least, and it was most magnificently received.

I beg to send my kind regard to Lady Russell, with many thanks for her remembrance, and am ever,

My dear Lord Russell, faithfully yours.

DCLXXXVIII. W. H. WILLS

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Thursday, June 24, 1869.

MY DEAR WILLS, — At a great meeting [1] compounded of your late "Chief," Charley, Morley, Grieve, and Telbin, your letter was read to-day, and a very sincere record of regret and thanks was placed on the books of the great institution.

Many thanks for the suggestion about the condition of churches. I am so aweary of church questions of all sorts that I am not quite clear as to tackling this. But I am turning it in my mind. I am afraid of two things: firstly, that the thing would not be picturesquely done; secondly, that a general cucumber-coolness would pervade the mind of our circulation.

Nothing new here but a speaking-pipe, a post-box, and a mouldy smell from some forgotten crypt — an extra mouldy smell, mouldier than of yore. Lillie sniffs, projects one eye into nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and does no more.

I have been to Chadwick's, to look at a new kind of cottage he has built (very ingenious and cheap).

We were all much disappointed last Saturday afternoon by a neighbouring fire being only at a carpenter's, and not at Drury Lane Theatre. Ellen's [2] child having an eye nearly poked out by a young friend, and being asked whether the young friend was not very sorry afterwards, replied, "No. *She* was n't. *I* was."

London execrable.

Ever affectionately yours.

P. S. — Love to Mrs. Wills.

[1] Of the Guild of Literature and Art.
[2] The housekeeper at the office.

ever read. I write with its impression newly and strongly upon me, and feel absolutely sure that I am not mistaken.

Believe me, faithfully yours always.

DCXCII. EDMUND OLLIER

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, August 3, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. OLLIER, — I am very sensible of the feeling of the Committee towards me; and I receive their invitation (conveyed through you) as a most acceptable mark of their consideration.

But I have a very strong objection to speech-making beside graves. I do not expect or wish my feeling in this wise to guide other men; still, it is so serious with me, and the idea of ever being the subject of such a ceremony myself is so repugnant to my soul, that I must decline to officiate.

Faithfully yours always.

DCXCIII. MISS DICKENS

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
No. 26, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W. C.,
Tuesday, August 3, 1869.

MY DEAREST MAMIE, — I send you the second chapter of the remarkable story. The printer is late with it, and I have not had time to read it, and as I altered it considerably here and there, I have no doubt there are some verbal mistakes in it. However, they will probably express themselves.

But I offer a prize of six pairs of gloves — between you, and your aunt, and Ellen Stone, as competitors — to whomsoever will tell me what idea in this second part is mine. I don't mean an idea in language, in the turning of a sentence, in any little description of an action, or a gesture, or what not in a small way, but an idea, distinctly affecting the whole story *as I found it*. You are all to assume that I found it in the main as you read it, with one exception. If I had written it, I should have made the woman love the man at last. And I should have shadowed that possibility out, by the child's bringing them a little more together on that holiday Sunday.

But I did n't write it. So finding that it wanted something, I put that something in. What was it?

Love to Ellen Stone.

DCXCIV. ARTHUR RYLAND

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Friday, August 13, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. RYLAND, — Many thanks for your letter.

I have very strong opinions on the subject of speechification, and hold that there is, everywhere, a vast amount too much of it. A sense of absurdity would be so strong upon me, if I got up at Birmingham to make a flourish on the advantages of education in the abstract for all sorts and conditions of men, that I should inevitably check myself and present a surprising incarnation of the soul of wit. But if I could interest myself in the practical usefulness of the particular institution; in the ways of life of the students; in their examples of perseverance and determination to get on; in their numbers, their favourite studies, the number of hours they must daily give to the work that must be done for a livelihood, before they can devote themselves to the acquisition of new knowledge, and so forth, then I could interest others. This is the kind of information I want. Mere holding forth "I utterly detest, abominate, and abjure."

I fear I shall not be in London next week. But if you will kindly send me here, at your leisure, the roughest notes of such points as I have indicated, I shall be heartily obliged to you, and will take care of their falling into shape and order in my mind. Meantime I "make a note of" Monday, 27th September, and of writing to you touching your kind offer of hospitality, three weeks before that date.

I beg to send my kind regard to Mrs. and Miss Ryland, and am always, Very faithfully yours.

DCXCV. HON. ROBERT LYTTON

26, WELLINGTON STREET, LONDON, Thursday, September 2, 1869.

MY DEAR ROBERT LYTTON, — "John Acland" is most willingly accepted, and shall come into the next monthly part. I shall make bold to condense him here and there (according to my best idea of story-telling), and particularly where he makes the speech. And with the usual fault of being too long, here and there, I think you let the story out too much, — prematurely, — and this I hope to prevent artfully. I think

your title open to the same objection, and therefore propose to substitute —

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN ACLAND.

This will leave the reader in doubt whether he really *was* murdered, until the end.

I am sorry you do not pursue the other prose series. You can do a great deal more than you think for, with whatever you touch; and you know where to find a firmly attached and admiring friend always ready to take the field with you, and always proud to see your plume among the feathers in the Staff.

Your account of my dear Boffin [1] is highly charming: I had been troubled with a misgiving that he was good. May his shadow never be more correct!

I wish I could have you at the murder from "Oliver Twist."

I am always, my dear Robert Lytton,

Affectionately your friend.

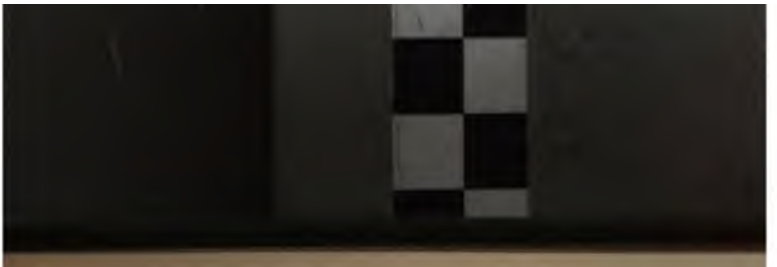
Pray give my kindest regards to Fascination Fledgeby, who (I have no doubt) has by this time half a dozen new names, feebly expressive of his great merits.

DCXCVI. ARTHUR RYLAND

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Monday, September 6, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. RYLAND, — I am sorry to find — I had a foreshadowing of it some weeks ago — that I shall not be able to profit by your kind offer of hospitality when I come to Birmingham for *our* Institution. I must come down in time for a quiet dinner at the hotel with my "Readings" secretary, Mr. Dolby, and must away next morning. Besides having a great deal in hand just now (the title of a new book among other things), I shall have visitors from abroad here at the time, and severely claimed by my daughter, who indeed is disloyal to ingham in the matter of my going away at all. Pray rep- me to Mrs. Ryland as the innocent victim of circum-, and as sacrificing pleasure to the work I have to do,

[1] "Boffin" and "Fascination Fledgeby" were nicknames given to his children by Mr. Robert Lytton at this time.



and to the training under which alone I can do it without feeling it.

You will see from the inclosed that I am in full force, and going to finish my readings, please God, after Christmas. I am in the hope of receiving your promised notes in due course, and continue in the irreverent condition in which I last reported myself on the subject of speech-making. Now that men not only make the nights of the session hideous by what the Americans call "orating" in Parliament, but trouble the peace of the vacation by saying over again what they said there (with the addition of what they *did n't* say there, and never will have the courage to say there), I feel indeed that silence, like gold across the Atlantic, is a rarity at a premium.

Faithfully yours always.

DCXCVII. HON. ROBERT LYTTON

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
26, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON,
Friday, October 1, 1869.

MY DEAR ROBERT LYTTON, — I am assured by a correspondent that "John Acland" has been done before. Said correspondent has evidently read the story — and is almost confident in "Chambers's Journal." This is very unfortunate, but of course cannot be helped. There is always a possibility of such a malignant conjunction of stars when the story is a true one.

In the case of a good story — as this is — liable for years to be told at table — as this was — there is nothing wonderful in such a mischance. Let us shuffle the cards, as Sancho says, and begin again.

You will of course understand that I do not tell you this by way of complaint. Indeed, I should not have mentioned it at all, but as an explanation to you of my reason for winding the story up (which I have done to-day) as expeditiously as possible. You might otherwise have thought me, on reading it as published, a little hard on Mr. Doilly. I have not had time to direct search to be made in "Chambers's;" but as to the main part of the *story having* been printed somewhere, I have not *the faintest doubt. And* I believe my correspondent to be also *right as to the where.* You could not help it any more than *could, and therefore* will not be troubled by it any more th *I am.*

The more I get of your writing, the better I shall be pleased.

Do believe me to be, as I am,

Your genuine admirer and affectionate friend.

DCXCVIII. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Thursday, October 7, 1869.

MY DEAR KENT, — I felt that you would be deeply disappointed. I thought it better not to make the first sign while you were depressed, but my mind has been constantly with you. And not mine alone. You cannot think with what affection and sympathy you have been made the subject of our family dinner talk at Gad's Hill these last three days. Nothing could exceed the interest of my daughters and my sister-in-law, or the earnestness of their feeling about it. I have been really touched by its warm and genuine expression.

Cheer up, my dear fellow; cheer up, for God's sake. That is, for the sake of all that is good in you and around you.

Ever your affectionate friend.

DCXCIX. W. C. MACREADY

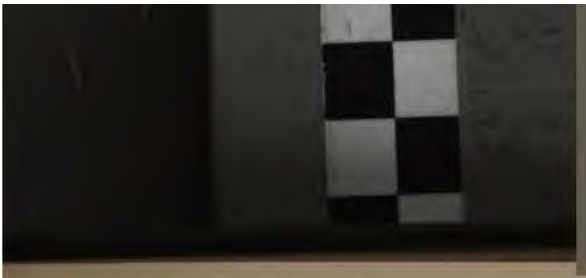
GAD'S HILL, Monday, October 18, 1869.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — I duly received your letter nearly a fortnight ago, with the greatest interest and pleasure. Above all things I am delighted with the prospect of seeing you here next summer; a prospect which has been received with nine times nine and one more by the whole house. You will hardly know the place again, it is so changed. You are not expected to admire; but there *is* a conservatory building at this moment — be still, my soul!

This leaves me in the preliminary agonies of a new book, which I hope to begin publishing (in twelve numbers, not twenty) next March. The coming readings being all in London, and being, after the first fortnight, only once a week, will divert my attention very little, I hope.

Harry has just gone up to Cambridge again, and I hope will get a fellowship in good time.

Wills is much gratified by your remembrance, and sends you



his warm regard. He wishes me to represent that he is very little to be pitied. That he suffers no pain, scarcely inconvenience, even, so long as he is idle. That he likes idleness exceedingly. He has bought a country place by Welwyn in Hertfordshire, near Lytton's, and takes possession presently.

My boy Sydney is now a second lieutenant, the youngest in the Service, I believe. He has the highest testimonials as an officer.

You may be quite sure there will be no international racing in American waters. Oxford knows better, or I am mistaken. The Harvard crew were a very good set of fellows, and very modest.

Ryland of Birmingham does n't look a day older, and was full of interest in you, and asked me to remind you of him. By the bye, at Elkington's I saw a pair of immense tea-urns from a railway station (Stafford), sent there to be repaired. They were honeycombed within in all directions, and had been supplying the passengers, under the active agency of hot water, with decomposed lead, copper, and a few other deadly poisons, for heaven knows how many years!

I must leave off in a hurry to catch the post, after a hard day's work.

Ever, my dearest Macready,
Your most affectionate and attached.

DCC. MR. RUSDEN

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Sunday, October 24, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. RUSDEN, — This very day a great meeting is announced to come off in London, as a demonstration in favour of a Fenian "amnesty." No doubt its numbers and importance are ridiculously over-estimated, but I believe the gathering will turn out to be big enough to be a very serious obstruction in the London streets. I have a great doubt whether such demonstrations ought to be allowed. They are bad as a precedent, and they unquestionably interfere with the general liberty and freedom of the subject.

Moreover, the time must come when this kind of threat and defiance will have to be forcibly stopped, and when the unreasonable toleration of it will lead to a sacrifice of life among

ively innocent lookers-on that might have been for a false confidence on their part, engendered in [illegible] system of *laisser aller*. You see how right we [illegible] and I, in our last correspondence on this head, and how desperately unsatisfactory the condition of Ireland is, especially when considered with a reference to America. The vernment has, through Mr. Gladstone, just now spoken out boldly in reference to the desired amnesty. (So much the better for them or they would unquestionably have gone by the board.) Still there is an uneasy feeling abroad that Mr. Gladstone himself would grant this amnesty if he dared, and that there is a great weakness in the rest of their Irish policy. And this feeling is very strong amongst the noisiest Irish howlers. Meanwhile, the newspapers go on arguing Irish matters as if the Irish were a reasonable people, in which immense assumption I, for one, have not the smallest faith.

Again, I have to thank you most heartily for your kindness to my two boys. It is impossible to predict how Plorn will settle down, or come out of the effort to do so. But he has unquestionably an affectionate nature, and a certain romantic touch in him. Both of these qualities are, I hope, more impressible for good than for evil, and I trust in God for the rest.

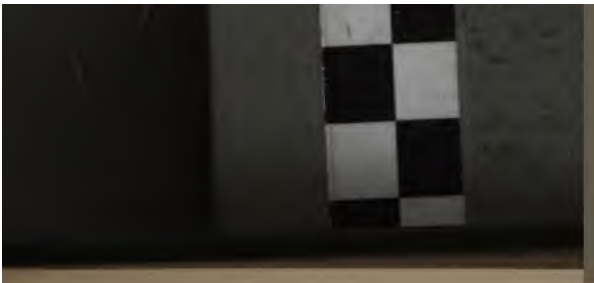
The news of Lord Derby's death will reach you, I suppose, at about the same time as this letter. A rash, impetuous, passionate man; but a great loss for his party, as a man of mind and mark. I was staying last June with Lord Russell — six or seven years older, but (except for being rather deaf) in wonderful preservation, and brighter and more completely armed at all points than I have seen him these twenty years.

As this need not be posted till Friday, I shall leave it open for a final word or two; and am until then, and then, and always afterwards, my dear Mr. Rusden,

Your faithful and much obliged.

Thursday, 28th.

We have no news in England except two slight changes in the Government consequent on Layard's becoming our Minister at Madrid. He is not long married to a charming lady, and will be far better in Spain than in the House of Commons. The Ministry are now holding councils on the Irish Land Tenure question, which is the next difficulty they have to deal



with, as you know. Last Sunday's meeting was a preposterous failure; still, it brought together in the streets of London all the ruffian part of the population of London, and that is a serious evil which any one of a thousand accidents might render mischievous. There is no existing law, however, to stop these assemblages, so that they keep moving while in the streets.

The Government was undoubtedly wrong when it considered it had the right to close Hyde Park; that is now universally conceded.

I write to Alfred and Plorn both by this mail. They can never say enough of your kindness when they write to me.

DCCI. A. H. LAYARD

GAD'S HILL PLACE, Monday, November 8, 1869.

MY DEAR LAYARD, — On Friday or Saturday next I can come to you at any time after twelve that will suit your convenience. I had no idea of letting you go away without my Godspeed; but I knew how busy you must be; and kept in the background, biding my time.

I am sure you know that there is no man living more attached to you than I am. After considering the subject with the jealousy of a friend, I have a strong conviction that your change [1] is a good one; ill as you can be spared from the ranks of men who are in earnest here.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Layard,

Ever faithfully yours.

DCCII. JAMES T. FIELDS

5, HYDE PARK PLACE, LONDON, W.,
Friday, January 14, 1870.

MY DEAR FIELDS, — We live here (opposite the Marble Arch) in a charming house until the 1st of June, and then return to Gad's. The conservatory is completed, and is a brilliant success; but an expensive one!

I should be quite ashamed of not having written to you and my dear Mrs. Fields before now, if I didn't know that you will both understand how occupied I am, and how naturally, when I put my papers away for the day, I get up and fly. I

[1] Mr. Layard's appointment as British Minister at Madrid.

have a large room here, with three fine windows, overlooking the Park — unsurpassable for airiness and cheerfulness.

You saw the announcement of the death of poor dear Harness. The circumstances are curious. He wrote to his old friend the Dean of Battle, saying he would come to visit him on that day (the day of his death). The Dean wrote back: "Come next day, instead, as we are obliged to go out to dinner, and you will be alone." Harness told his sister a little impatiently that he *must* go on the first-named day; that he had made up his mind to go, and MUST. He had been getting himself ready for dinner, and came to a part of the staircase whence two doors opened — one, upon another level passage; one, upon a flight of stone steps. He opened the wrong door, fell down the steps, injured himself very severely, and died in a few hours.

You will know — *I* don't — what Fechter's success is in America at the time of this present writing. In his farewell performances at the Princess's he acted very finely. I thought the three first acts of his Hamlet very much better than I had ever thought them before — and I always thought very highly of them. We gave him a foaming stirrup cup at Gad's Hill.

Forster (who has been ill with his bronchitis again) thinks No. 2 of the new book ("Edwin Drood") a clincher, — I mean that word (as his own expression) for *Clincher*. There is a curious interest steadily working up to No. 5, which requires a great deal of art and self-denial. I think also, apart from character and picturesqueness, that the young people are placed in a very novel situation. So I hope — at Nos. 5 and 6, the story will turn upon an interest suspended until the end.

I can't believe it, and don't, and won't, but they say Harry's twenty-first birthday is next Sunday. I have entered him at the Temple just now; and if he don't get a fellowship at Trinity Hall when his time comes, I shall be disappointed, if in the present disappointed state of existence.

I hope you may have met with the little touch of Radicalism I gave them at Birmingham in the words of Buckle? With pride I observe that it makes the regular political traders, of all sorts, perfectly mad. Such was my intentions, as a grateful acknowledgment of having been misrepresented.

I think Mrs. ——'s prose very admirable; but I don't believe ! No, I do *not*. My conviction is that those islanders get ightfully bored by the islands, and wish they had never set yes upon them!

Leigh Hunt

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R L

Charley Collins has done a charming cover for the monthly part of the new book. At the very earnest representations of Millais (and after having seen a great number of his drawings) I am going to engage with a new man; retaining, of course, C. C.'s cover aforesaid.[1] Katie has made some more capital portraits, and is always improving.

My dear Mrs. Fields, if "He" (made proud by chairs and bloated by pictures) does not give you my dear love, let us conspire against him when you find him out, and exclude him from all future confidences. Until then,

Ever affectionately yours and his.

DCCIII. W. H. WILLS

5, Hyde Park Place, London, W.,
Sunday, January 23, 1870.

My dear Wills, — In the note I had from you about Nancy and Sikes, you seem to refer to some other note you had written me. Therefore I think it well merely to mention that I have received no other note.

I do not wonder at your not being up to the undertaking (even if you had had no cough) under the wearing circumstances. It was a very curious scene. The actors and actresses (most of the latter looking very pretty) mustered in extraordinary force, and were a fine audience. I set myself to carrying out of themselves and their observation those who were bent on watching how the effects were got; and I believe I succeeded. Coming back to it again, however, I feel it was madness ever to do it so continuously. My ordinary pulse is seventy-two, and it runs up under this effort to one hundred and twelve. Besides which, it takes me ten or twelve minutes to get my wind back at all; I being, in the mean time, like the man who lost the fight — in fact, his express image. Frank Beard was in attendance to make divers experiments to report to Watson; and although, as you know, he stopped it instantly when he found me at Preston, he was very much astonished by the effects of the reading on the reader.

So I hope you may be able to come and hear it before it is silent for ever. It is done again on the evenings of the 1st

[1] Mr. Charles Collins was obliged to give up the illustrating of *Edwin Drood*, on account of his failing health.

February, 15th February, and 8th March. I hope, now I have got over the mornings, that I may be able to work on my book. But up to this time the great preparation required in getting the subjects up again, and the twice a week besides, have almost exclusively occupied me.

I have something the matter with my right thumb, and can't (as you see) write plainly. I sent a word to poor Robert Chambers,[1] and I send my love to Mrs. Wills.

Ever, my dear Wills, affectionately yours.

DCCIV. LORD LYTTON

5, Hyde Park Place, Monday, February 14, 1870.

My dear Lytton, — I ought to have mentioned in my hurried note to you, that my knowledge of the consultation[2] in question only preceded yours by certain hours; and that Longman asked me if I would make the design known to you, as he thought it might be a liberty to address you otherwise. This I did therefore.

The class of writers to whom you refer at the close of your note have no copyright, and do not come within my case at all. I quite agree with you as to their propensities and deserts.

Indeed, I suppose in the main that there is very little difference between our opinions. I do not think the present Government worse than another, and I think it better than another by the presence of Mr. Gladstone; but it appears to me that our system fails.

Ever yours.

DCCV. HENRY FIELDING DICKENS

5, Hyde Park Place, W.,
Thursday, February 17, 1870.

My dear Harry, — I am extremely glad to hear that you have made a good start at the Union. Take any amount of pains about it; open your mouth well and roundly, speak to the last person visible, and give yourself time.

Loves from all.

Ever affectionately.

[1] On the death of his second wife.

[2] A meeting of Publishers and Authors to discuss the subject of International Copyright.

DCCVI. W. C. MACREADY

Wednesday, March 2, 1870.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — This is to wish you and yours all happiness and prosperity at the well-remembered anniversary to-morrow. You may be sure that loves and happy returns will not be forgotten at *our* table.

I have been getting on very well with my book, and we are having immense audiences at St. James's Hall. Mary has been celebrating the first glimpses of spring by having the measles. She got over the disorder very easily, but a weakness remains behind. Katie is blooming. Georgina is in perfect order, and all send you their very best loves. It gave me true pleasure to have your sympathy with me in the second little speech at Birmingham. I was determined that my radicalism should not be called in question. The electric wires are not very exact in their reporting, but at all events the sense was there. Ryland, as usual, made all sorts of inquiries about you.

With love to dear Mrs. Macready and the noble boy, my particular friend, and a hearty embrace to you,

I am ever, my dearest Macready,
Your most affectionate.

DCCVII. MR. ——

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Wednesday, March 9, 1870.

MY DEAR ——, — You make me very uneasy on the subject of your new long story here, by sowing your name broadcast in so many fields at once, and undertaking such an impossible amount of fiction at one time. Just as you are coming on with us, you have another story in progress in the "Gentleman's Magazine," and another announced in "Once a Week." And so far as I know the art we both profess, it cannot be reasonably pursued in this way. I think the short story you are now finishing in these pages obviously marked by traces of great haste and small consideration; and a long story similarly blemished would really do the publication irreparable harm.

These considerations are so much upon my mind that I cannot forbear representing them to you, in the hope that they

may induce you to take a little more into account the necessity of care and preparation, and some self-denial in the quantity done. I am quite sure that I write fully as much in your interest as in that of "All the Year Round."

Believe me, always faithfully yours.

DCCVIII. MR. ——

5, Hyde Park Place, W.,
Friday, March 11, 1870.

My dear ——, — Of course the engagement between us is to continue, and I am sure you know me too well to suppose that I have ever had a thought to the contrary. Your explanation is (as it naturally would be, being yours) manly and honest, and I am both satisfied and hopeful. Ever yours.

DCCIX. HENRY FIELDING DICKENS

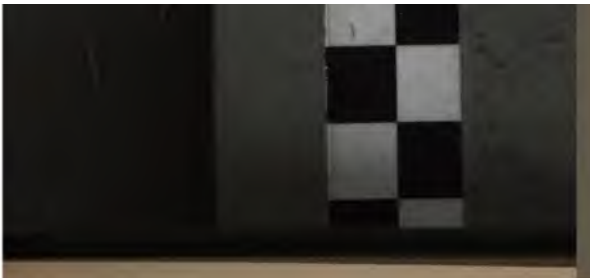
5, Hyde Park Place, W.,
Tuesday, March 29, 1870.

My dear Harry, — Your next Tuesday's subject is a very good one. I would not lose the point that narrow-minded fanatics, who decry the theatre and defame its artists, are absolutely the advocates of depraved and barbarous amusements. For wherever a good drama and a well-regulated theatre decline, some distorted form of theatrical entertainment will infallibly arise in their place. In one of the last chapters of "Hard Times," Mr. Sleary says something to the effect, "People will be entertained thomehow, thquire. Make the betht of uth, and not the wortht." Ever affectionately.

DCCX. SHIRLEY BROOKS

5, Hyde Park Place, W.,
Friday, April 1, 1870.

My dear Shirley Brooks, — I have written to Mr. Low, expressing my regret that I cannot comply with his request, backed as it is by my friend S. B. But I have told him what is perfectly true — that I leave town for the peaceful following of my own pursuits, at the end of next month; that I have excused myself from filling all manner of claims, on the ground



that the public engagements I could make for the season were very few and were all made; and that I cannot bear hot rooms when I am at work. I have smoothed this as you would have me smooth it.

With your longing for fresh air I can thoroughly sympathise. May you get it soon, and may you enjoy it, and profit by it half as much as I wish! Ever faithfully yours.

DCCXI. MR. CHARLES MACKAY

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"
Thursday, April 21, 1870.

MY DEAR MACKAY, — I have placed "God's Acre." The prose paper, "The False Friend," has lingered, because it seems to me that the idea is to be found in an introduced story of mine called "The Baron of Grogzwig" in "Pickwick."

Be pleasant with the Scottish people in handling Johnson, because I love them. Ever faithfully.

DCCXII. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

Monday Morning, April 25, 1870.

MY DEAR KENT, — I received your book[1] with the greatest pleasure, and heartily thank you for it. It is a volume of a highly prepossessing appearance, and a most friendly look. I felt as if I should have taken to it at sight; even (a very large even) though I had known nothing of its contents, or of its author!

For the last week I have been most perseveringly and ding-dong-doggedly at work, making headway but slowly. The spring always has a restless influence over me; and I weary, at any season, of this London dining-out beyond expression; and I yearn for the country again. This is my excuse for not having written to you sooner. Besides which, I had a baseless conviction that I should see you at the office last Thursday. Not having done so, I fear you must be worse, or no better? If you *can* let me have a report of yourself, pray do.

[1] *A new collective edition of Kent's Poems.*

DCCXIII. MRS. FREDERICK POLLOCK

5, Hyde Park Place, W., Monday, May 2, 1870.

My dear Mrs. Pollock, — Pray tell the illustrious Philip van Artevelde, that I will deal with the nefarious case in question if I can. I am a little doubtful of the practicability of doing so, and frisking outside the bounds of the law of libel. I have that high opinion of the law of England generally, which one is likely to derive from the impression that it puts all the honest men under the diabolical hoofs of all the scoundrels. It makes me cautious of doing right; an admirable instance of its wisdom!

I was very sorry to have gone astray from you that Sunday; but as the earlier disciples entertained angels unawares, so the later often miss them hap-hazard.

Your description of La Font's acting is the complete truth in one short sentence: Nature's triumph over art; reversing the copy-book axiom! But the Lord deliver us from Plessy's mechanical ingenuousness!!

And your petitioner will ever pray.

And ever be,

Faithfully yours.

DCCXIV. MRS. E. M. WARD

5, Hyde Park Place, W., Wednesday, May 11, 1870.

My dear Mrs. Ward, — I grieve to say that I am literally laid by the heels, and incapable of dining with you to-morrow. A neuralgic affection of the foot, which usually seizes me about twice a year, and which will yield to nothing but days of fomentation and horizontal rest, set in last night, and has caused me very great pain ever since, and will too clearly be no better until it has had its usual time in which to wear itself out. I send my kindest regard to Ward, and beg to be pitied.

Believe me, faithfully yours always.

DCCXV. J. B. BUCKSTONE[1]

Sunday, May 15, 1870.

My dear Buckstone, — I send a duplicate of this note to the Haymarket, in case it should miss you out of town. For a few years I have been liable, at wholly uncertain and incalculable times, to a severe attack of neuralgia in the foot, about once in the course of a year. It began in an injury to the finer muscles or nerves, occasioned by over-walking in the deep snow. When it comes on I cannot stand, and can bear no covering whatever on the sensitive place. One of these seizures is upon me now. Until it leaves me I could no more walk into St. James's Hall than I could fly in the air. I hope you will present my duty to the Prince of Wales, and assure his Royal Highness that nothing short of my being (most unfortunately) disabled for the moment would have prevented my attending, as trustee of the Fund,[2] at the dinner, and warmly expressing my poor sense of the great and inestimable service his Royal Highness renders to a most deserving institution by so kindly commending it to the public.

Faithfully yours always.

DCCXVI. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

5, Hyde Park Place, W., Tuesday, May 17, 1870.

My dear Kent, — Many, many thanks! It is only my neuralgic foot. It has given me such a sharp twist this time that I have not been able, in its extreme sensitiveness, to put any covering upon it except scalding fomentations. Having viciously bubbled and blistered it in all directions, I hope it now begins to see the folly of its ways.

Affectionately ever.

P. S. — I hope the Sun shines.

[1] Printed in Mackenzie's *Life of Dickens*.
[2] The General Theatrical Fund.

DCCXVII. MR. RUSDEN

ATHENÆUM, Friday Evening, May 20, 1870.

MY DEAR MR. RUSDEN, — I received your most interesting and clear-sighted letter about Plorn just before the departure of the last mail from here to you. I did not answer then because another incoming mail was nearly due, and I expected (knowing Plorn so well) that some communication from him such as he made to you would come to me. I was not mistaken. The same arguing of the squatter question — vegetables and all — appeared. This gave me an opportunity of touching on those points by this mail, without in the least compromising you. I cannot too completely express my concurrence with your excellent idea that his correspondence with you should be regarded as confidential. Just as I could not possibly suggest a word more neatly to the point, or more thoughtfully addressed, to such a young man than your reply to his letter, I hope you will excuse my saying that it is a perfect model of tact, good sense, and good feeling. I had been struck by his persistently ignoring the possibility of his holding any other position in Australasia than his present position, and had inferred from it a homeward tendency. What is most curious to me is that he is very sensible, and yet does not seem to understand that he has qualified himself for no public examinations in the old country, and could not possibly hold his own against any competition for anything to which I could get him nominated.

But I must not trouble you about my boys as if they were yours. It is enough that I can never thank you for your goodness to them in a generous consideration of me.

I believe the truth as to France to be that a citizen Frenchman never forgives, and that Napoleon will never live down the *coup d'état*. This makes it enormously difficult for any well-advised English newspaper to support him, and pretend not to know on what a volcano his throne is set. Informed as to his designs on the one hand, and the perpetual uneasiness of his police on the other (to say nothing of a doubtful army), the "Times" has a difficult game to play. My own impression is that if it were played too boldly for him, the old deplorable national antagonism would revive in his going down. That the wind will pass over his Imperiality on the sands of France I

have not the slightest doubt. In no country on the earth, but least of all there, can you seize people in their houses on political warrants, and kill in the streets, on no warrant at all, without raising a gigantic Nemesis — not very reasonable in detail, perhaps, but none the less terrible for that.

The commonest dog or man driven mad is a much more alarming creature than the same individuality in a sober and commonplace condition.

Your friend —— —— is setting the world right generally all round (including the flattened ends, the two poles), and, as a Minister said to me the other day, "has the one little fault of omniscience."

You will probably have read before now that I am going to be everything the Queen can make me.[1] If my authority be worth anything, believe on it that I am going to be nothing but what I am, and that that includes my being as long as I live,

Your faithful and heartily obliged.

DCCXVIII. ALFRED TENNYSON DICKENS[2]

ATHENÆUM CLUB, Friday Night, May 20, 1870.

MY DEAR ALFRED,[3] — I have just time to tell you under my own hand that I invited Mr. Bear to a dinner of such guests as he would naturally like to see, and that we took to him very much, and got on with him capitally.

I am doubtful whether Plorn is taking to Australia. Can you find out his real mind? I notice that he always writes as if his present life were the be-all and the end-all of his emigration, and as if I had no idea of you two becoming proprietors, and aspiring to the first positions in the colony, without casting off the old connection.

From Mr. Bear I had the best accounts of you. I told him that they did not surprise me, for I had unbounded faith in you. For which take my love and blessing.

They will have told you all the news here, and that I am hard at work. This is not a letter so much as an assurance that I never think of you without hope and comfort.

Ever, my dear Alfred,

Your affectionate Father.

[1] An allusion to an unfounded rumour.

[2] Charles Dickens's son, Alfred Tennyson.

[3] This letter did not reach Australia until after the telegraph had brought news to the sons of their father's death.

DCCXIX. MRS. BANCROFT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Thursday, May 31, 1870.

MY DEAR MRS. BANCROFT,[1] — I am most heartily obliged to you for your kind note, which I received here only last night, having come here from town circuitously to get a little change of air on the road. My sense of your interest cannot be better proved than by my trying the remedy you recommend, and that I will do immediately. As I shall be in town on Thursday, my troubling you to order it would be quite unjustifiable. I will use your name in applying for it, and will report the result after a fair trial. Whether this remedy succeeds or fails as to the neuralgia, I shall always consider myself under an obligation to it for having indirectly procured me the great pleasure of receiving a communication from you; for I hope I may lay claim to being one of the most earnest and delighted of your many artistic admirers.

Believe me, faithfully yours.

DCCXX. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, June 8, 1870.

MY DEAR KENT, — To-morrow is a very bad day for me to make a call, as, in addition to my usual office business, I have a mass of accounts to settle with Wills. But I hope I may be ready for you at three o'clock. If I can't be — why, then I shan't be.

You must really get rid of those Opal enjoyments. They are too overpowering: —

"These violent delights have violent ends."

I think it was a father of your church who made the wise remark to a young gentleman who got up early (or stayed out late) at Verona?

Ever affectionately,

C. D.

[1] Miss Marie Wilton.

DCCXXI. JOHN M. MAKEHAM

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Wednesday, June 8, 1870.

DEAR SIR, — It would be quite inconceivable to me — but for your letter[1] — that any reasonable reader could possibly attach a scriptural reference to a passage in a book of mine, reproducing a much-abused social figure of speech, impressed into all sorts of service, on all sorts of inappropriate occasions, without the faintest connection of it with its original source. I am truly shocked to find that any reader can make the mistake.

I have always striven in my writings to express veneration for the life and lessons of our Saviour, because I feel it, and because I re-wrote that history for my children, every one of whom knew it from having it repeated to them, long before they could read, and almost as soon as they could speak.

But I have never made proclamation of this from the house-tops.

Faithfully yours,

CHARLES DICKENS.

[1] Mr. Makeham had written Dickens in reference to a passage in the tenth chapter of *Edwin Drood*, respecting which he had suggested that Dickens might have forgotten that a certain figure of speech alluded to by him was drawn from Scripture, and was a prophetic description of the sufferings of the Saviour.

SPEECHES OF CHARLES DICKENS

I

Edinburgh, June 25, 1841

[At a public dinner, given in honour of Mr. Dickens, and presided over by the late Professor Wilson.]

If I felt your warm and generous welcome less, I should be better able to thank you. If I could have listened as you have listened to the glowing language of your distinguished chairman, and if I could have heard as you heard the "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," which he has uttered, it would have gone hard but I should have caught some portion of his enthusiasm, and kindled at his example. But every word which fell from his lips, and every demonstration of sympathy and approbation with which you received his eloquent expressions, renders me unable to respond to his kindness, and leaves me at last all heart and no lips, yearning to respond as I would do to your cordial greeting — possessing, heaven knows, the will, and desiring only to find the way.

The way to your good opinion, favour, and support has been to me very pleasing — a path strewn with flowers and cheered with sunshine. I feel as if I stood amongst old friends, whom I had intimately known and highly valued. I feel as if the deaths of the fictitious creatures, in which you have been kind enough to express an interest, had endeared us to each other as real afflictions deepen friendships in actual life; I feel as if they had been real persons, whose fortunes we had pursued together in inseparable connection, and that I had never known them apart from you.

It is a difficult thing for a man to speak of himself or of his works. But perhaps on this occasion I may, without impropriety, venture to say a word on the spirit in which mine were conceived. I felt an earnest and humble desire, and shall do till I die, to increase the stock of harmless cheerfulness. I felt

that the world was not utterly to be despised; that it was worthy of living in for many reasons. I was anxious to find, as the Professor has said, if I could, in evil things, that soul of goodness which the Creator has put in them. I was anxious to show that virtue may be found in the by-ways of the world; that it is not incompatible with poverty and even with rags, and to keep steadily through life the motto, expressed in the burning words of your Northern poet: —

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man 's the gowd for a' that."

And in following this track, where could I have better assurance that I was right, or where could I have stronger assurance to cheer me on, than in your kindness on this to me memorable night?

I am anxious and glad to have an opportunity of saying a word in reference to one incident in which I am happy to know you were interested, and still more happy to know, though it may sound paradoxical, that you were disappointed — I mean the death of the little heroine. When I first conceived the idea of conducting that simple story to its termination, I determined rigidly to adhere to it, and never to forsake the end I had in view. Not untried in the school of affliction, in the death of those we love, I thought what a good thing it would be if in my little work of pleasant amusement I could substitute a garland of fresh flowers for the sculptured horrors which disgrace the tomb. If I have put into my book anything which can fill the young mind with better thoughts of death, or soften the grief of older hearts; if I have written one word which can afford pleasure or consolation to old or young in time of trial, I shall consider it as something achieved — something which I shall be glad to look back upon in after life. Therefore I kept to my purpose, notwithstanding that towards the conclusion of the story, I daily received letters of remonstrance, especially from the ladies. God bless them for their tender mercies! The Professor was quite right when he said that I had not reached to an adequate delineation of their virtues; and I fear that I must go on blotting their characters in endeavouring to reach the ideal in my mind. These letters were, however, combined with others from the sterner sex, and some of them were not altogether free from personal invective. But, notwith-

standing, I kept to my purpose, and I am happy to know that many of those who at first condemned me are now foremost in their approbation.

If I have made a mistake in detaining you with this little incident, I do not regret having done so; for your kindness has given me such a confidence in you, that the fault is yours and not mine. I come once more to thank you, and here I am in a difficulty again. The distinction you have conferred upon me is one which I never hoped for, and of which I never dared to dream. That it is one which I shall never forget, and that while I live I shall be proud of its remembrance, you must well know. I believe I shall never hear the name of this capital of Scotland without a thrill of gratitude and pleasure. I shall love while I have life her people, her hills, and her houses, and even the very stones of her streets. And if in the future works which may lie before me you should discern — God grant you may! — a brighter spirit and a clearer wit, I pray you to refer it back to this night, and point to that as a Scottish passage for evermore. I thank you again and again, with the energy of a thousand thanks in each one, and I drink to you with a heart as full as my glass, and far easier emptied, I do assure you.

II

Boston, February 1, 1842

[At a dinner given to Mr. Dickens by the young men of Boston. The chairman was Mr. Josiah Quincy, then President of Harvard College. The toast of "Health, happiness, and a hearty welcome to Charles Dickens," was proposed by the chairman.]

Gentlemen, — If you had given this splendid entertainment to any one else in the whole wide world — if I were to-night to exult in the triumph of my dearest friend — if I stood here upon my defence, to repel any unjust attack — to appeal as a stranger to your generosity and kindness as the freest people on the earth — I could, putting some restraint upon myself, stand among you as self-possessed and unmoved as I should be alone in my own room in England. But when I have the echoes of your cordial greeting ringing in my ears; when I see your kind faces beaming a welcome so warm and earnest as never man had — I feel, it is my nature, so van-

quished and subdued, that I have hardly fortitude enough to thank you. If your President, instead of pouring forth that delightful mixture of humour and pathos which you have just heard with so much delight, had been but a caustic, ill-natured man — if he had only been a dull one — if I could only have doubted or distrusted him or you, I should have had my wits at my fingers' ends, and, using them, could have held you at arm's length. But you have given me no such opportunity; you take advantage of me in the tenderest point; you give me no chance of playing at company, or holding you at a distance, but flock about me like a host of brothers, and make this place like home. Indeed, gentlemen, indeed, if it be natural and allowable for each of us, on his own hearth, to express his thoughts in the most homely fashion, and to appear in his plainest garb, I have a fair claim upon you to let me do so to-night, for you have made my house an Aladdin's Palace. You fold so tenderly within your breasts that common household lamp in which my feeble fire is all enshrined, and at which my flickering torch is lighted up, that straight my household gods take wing, and are transported there. And whereas it is written of that fairy structure that it never moved without two shocks — one when it rose, and one when it settled down — I can say of mine that, however sharp a tug it took to pluck it from its native ground, it struck at once an easy, and a deep and lasting root into this soil, and loved it as its own. I can say more of it, and say with truth, that long before it moved, or had a chance of moving, its master — perhaps from some secret sympathy between its timbers and a certain stately tree that has its being hereabout, and spreads its broad branches far and wide — dreamed by day and night, for years, of setting foot upon this shore, and breathing this pure air. And, trust me, gentlemen, that, if I had wandered here, unknowing and unknown, I would — if I know my own heart — have come with all my sympathies clustering as richly about this land and people — with all my sense of justice as keenly alive to their high claims on every man who loves God's image — with all my energies as fully bent on judging for myself, and speaking out, and telling in my sphere the truth, as I do now, when you rain down your welcomes on my head.

Your President has alluded to those writings which have

been my occupation for some years past; and you have received his allusions in a manner which assures me — if I needed any such assurance — that we are old friends in the spirit, and have been in close communion for a long time.

It is not easy for a man to speak of his own books. I dare say that few persons have been more interested in mine than I, and if it be a general principle in nature that a lover's love is blind, and that a mother's love is blind, I believe it may be said of an author's attachment to the creatures of his own imagination, that it is a perfect model of constancy and devotion, and is the blindest of all. But the objects and purposes I have had in view are very plain and simple, and may be easily told. I have always had, and always shall have, an earnest and true desire to contribute, as far as in me lies, to the common stock of healthful cheerfulness and enjoyment. I have always had, and always shall have, an invincible repugnance to that mole-eyed philosophy which loves the darkness, and winks and scowls in the light. I believe that Virtue shows quite as well in rags and patches as she does in purple and fine linen. I believe that she and every beautiful object in external nature claim some sympathy in the breast of the poorest man who breaks his scanty loaf of daily bread. I believe that she goes barefoot as well as shod. I believe that she dwells rather oftener in alleys and by-ways than she does in courts and palaces, and that it is good, and pleasant, and profitable to track her out, and follow her. I believe that to lay one's hand upon some of those rejected ones whom the world has too long forgotten, and too often misused, and to say to the proudest and most thoughtless — "These creatures have the same elements and capacities of goodness as yourselves; they are moulded in the same form, and made of the same clay; and though ten times worse than you, may, in having retained anything of their original nature amidst the trials and distresses of their condition, be really ten times better;" I believe that to do this is to pursue a worthy and not useless vocation. Gentlemen, that you think so too, your fervent greeting sufficiently assures me. That this feeling is alive in the Old World as well as in the New, no man should know better than I — I, who have found such wide and ready sympathy in my own dear land. That in expressing it, we are but treading in the

steps of those great master-spirits who have gone before, we know by reference to all the bright examples in our literature, from Shakespeare downward.

There is one other point connected with the labours (if I may call them so) that you hold in such generous esteem, to which I cannot help adverting. I cannot help expressing the delight, the more than happiness it was to me to find so strong an interest awakened on this side of the water in favour of that little heroine of mine, to whom your President has made allusion, who died in her youth. I had letters about that child, in England, from the dwellers in log-houses among the morasses, and swamps, and densest forests, and deepest solitudes of the Far West. Many a sturdy hand, hard with the axe and spade, and browned by the summer's sun, has taken up the pen, and written to me a little history of domestic joy or sorrow, always coupled, I am proud to say, with something of interest in that little tale, or some comfort or happiness derived from it, and my correspondent has always addressed me, not as a writer of books for sale, resident some four or five thousand miles away, but as a friend to whom he might freely impart the joys and sorrows of his own fireside. Many a mother — I could reckon them now by dozens, not by units — has done the like, and has told me how she lost such a child at such a time, and where she lay buried, and how good she was, and how, in this or that respect, she resembled Nell. I do assure you that no circumstance of my life has given me one hundredth part of the gratification I have derived from this source. I was wavering at the time whether or not to wind up my Clock,[1] and come and see this country, and this decided me. I felt as if it were a positive duty, as if I were bound to pack up my clothes, and come and see my friends; and even now I have such an odd sensation in connection with these things, that you have no chance of spoiling me. I feel as though we were agreeing — as indeed we are, if we substitute for fictitious characters the classes from which they are drawn — about third parties, in whom we had a common interest. At every new act of kindness on your part, I say to myself, "That 's for Oliver; I should not wonder if that were meant for Smike; I have no doubt that is intended for Nell;" and

[1] *Master Humphrey's Clock*, under which title the two novels of *Barnaby Rudge* and *The Old Curiosity Shop* originally appeared. — Ed.

so I become a much happier, certainly, but a more sober and retiring man than ever I was before.

Gentlemen, talking of my friends in America brings me back, naturally and of course, to you. Coming back to you, and being thereby reminded of the pleasure we have in store in hearing the gentlemen who sit about me, I arrive by the easiest though not by the shortest course in the world, at the end of what I have to say. But before I sit down, there is one topic on which I am desirous to lay particular stress. It has, or should have, a strong interest for us all, since to its literature every country must look for one great means of refining and improving its people, and one great source of national pride and honour. You have in America great writers — great writers — who will live in all time, and are as familiar to our lips as household words. Deriving (as they all do in a greater or less degree, in their several walks) their inspiration from the stupendous country that gave them birth, they diffuse a better knowledge of it, and a higher love for it, all over the civilised world. I take leave to say, in the presence of some of those gentlemen, that I hope the time is not far distant when they, in America, will receive of right some substantial profit and return in England from their labours; and when we, in England, shall receive some substantial profit and return in America for ours. Pray do not misunderstand me. Securing to myself from day to day the means of an honourable subsistence, I would rather have the affectionate regard of my fellow-men than I would have heaps and mines of gold. But the two things do not seem to me incompatible. They cannot be, for nothing good is incompatible with justice. There must be an international arrangement in this respect: England has done her part, and I am confident that the time is not far distant when America will do hers. It becomes the character of a great country: *firstly*, because it is justice; *secondly*, because without it you never can have, and keep, a literature of your own.

Gentlemen, I thank you with feelings of gratitude, such as are not often awakened, and can never be expressed. As I understand it to be the pleasant custom here to finish with a toast, I would beg to give you: AMERICA AND ENGLAND, and may they never have any division but the Atlantic between them.

III

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, FEBRUARY 7, 1842

GENTLEMEN, — To say that I thank you for the earnest manner in which you have drunk the toast just now so eloquently proposed to you; to say that I give you back your kind wishes and good feelings with more than compound interest, and that I feel how dumb and powerless the best acknowledgments would be beside such genial hospitality as yours, is nothing. To say that in this winter season flowers have sprung up in every footstep's length of the path which has brought me here, that no country ever smiled more pleasantly than yours has smiled on me, and that I have rarely looked upon a brighter summer prospect than that which lies before me now, is nothing.

But it is something to be no stranger in a strange place — to feel, sitting at a board for the first time, the ease and affection of an old guest, and to be at once on such intimate terms with the family as to have a homely, genuine interest in its every member — it is, I say, something to be in this novel and happy frame of mind. And as it is of your creation, and owes its being to you, I have no reluctance in urging it as a reason why, in addressing you, I should not so much consult the form and fashion of my speech, as I should employ that universal language of the heart, which you, and such as you, best teach, and best can understand. Gentlemen, in that universal language — common to you in America, and to us in England, as that younger mother-tongue, which, by the means of and through the happy union of our two great countries, shall be spoken ages hence, by land and sea, over the wide surface of the globe — I thank you.

I had occasion to say the other night in Boston, as I have more than once had occasion to remark before, that it is not easy for an author to speak of his own books. If the task be a difficult one at any time, its difficulty, certainly, is not diminished when a frequent recurrence to the same theme has left one nothing new to say. Still, I feel that, in a company like this, and especially after what has been said by the President, I ought not to pass lightly over those labours of love, which, if they had no other merit, have been the happy means of bringing us together.

It has been often observed, that you cannot judge of an author's personal character from his writings. It may be that you cannot. I think it very likely, for many reasons, that you cannot. But, at least, a reader will rise from the perusal of a book with some defined and tangible idea of the writer's moral creed and broad purposes, if he has any at all; and it is probable enough that he may like to have this idea confirmed from the author's lips, or dissipated by his explanation. Gentlemen, my moral creed — which is a very wide and comprehensive one, and includes all sects and parties — is very easily summed up. I have faith, and I wish to diffuse faith in the existence — yes, of beautiful things, even in those conditions of society which are so degenerate, degraded, and forlorn, that, at first sight, it would seem as though they could not be described but by a strange and terrible reversal of the words of Scripture, "God said, Let there be light, and there was none." I take it that we are born, and that we hold our sympathies, hopes, and energies, in trust for the many, and not for the few. That we cannot hold in too strong a light of disgust and contempt, before the view of others, all meanness, falsehood, cruelty, and oppression, of every grade and kind. Above all, that nothing is high, because it is in a high place; and that nothing is low, because it is in a low one. This is the lesson taught us in the great book of nature. This is the lesson which may be read, alike in the bright track of the stars, and in the dusty course of the poorest thing that drags its tiny length upon the ground. This is the lesson ever uppermost in the thoughts of that inspired man, who tells us that there are

> "Tongues in the trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

Gentlemen, keeping these objects steadily before me, I am at no loss to refer your favour and your generous hospitality back to the right source. While I know, on the one hand, that if, instead of being what it is, this were a land of tyranny and wrong, I should care very little for your smiles or frowns, so I am sure upon the other, that if, instead of being what I am, I were the greatest genius that ever trod the earth, and had diverted myself for the oppression and degradation of mankind, you would despise and reject me. I hope you will, whenever, through such means, I give you the opportunity. Trust me,

that, whenever you give me the like occasion, I will return the compliment with interest.

Gentlemen, as I have no secrets from you, in the spirit of confidence you have engendered between us, and as I have made a kind of compact with myself that I never will, while I remain in America, omit an opportunity of referring to a topic in which I and all others of my class on both sides of the water are equally interested — equally interested, there is no difference between us, I would beg leave to whisper in your ear two words: "International Copyright." I use them in no sordid sense, believe me, and those who know me best, best know that. For myself, I would rather that my children, coming after me, trudged in the mud, and knew by the general feeling of society that their father was beloved, and had been of some use, than I would have them ride in their carriages, and know by their banker's books that he was rich. But I do not see, I confess, why one should be obliged to make the choice, or why Fame, besides playing that delightful *réveil* for which she is so justly celebrated, should not blow out of her trumpet a few notes of a different kind from those with which she has hitherto contented herself.

It was well observed the other night by a beautiful speaker, whose words went to the heart of every man who heard him, that, if there had existed any law in this respect, Scott might not have sunk beneath the mighty pressure on his brain, but might have lived to add new creatures of his fancy to the crowd which swarm about you in your summer walks, and gather round your winter evening hearths.

As I listened to his words, there came back, fresh upon me, that touching scene in the great man's life, when he lay upon his couch, surrounded by his family, and listened, for the last time, to the rippling of the river he had so well loved, over its stony bed. I pictured him to myself, faint, wan, dying, crushed both in mind and body by his honourable struggle, and hovering round him the phantoms of his own imagination — Waverley, Ravenswood, Jeanie Deans, Rob Roy, Caleb Balderstone, Dominie Sampson — all the familiar throng — with Cavaliers, and Puritans, and Highland chiefs innumerable overflowing the chamber, and fading away in the dim distance beyond. I pictured them, fresh from traversing the world, and hanging down their heads in shame and sorrow, that, from all

those lands into which they had carried gladness, instruction, and delight for millions, they brought him not one friendly hand to help to raise him from that sad, sad bed. No, nor brought him from that land in which his own language was spoken, and in every house and hut of which his own books were read in his own tongue, one grateful dollar-piece to buy a garland for his grave. Oh, if every man who goes from here as many do, to look upon that tomb in Dryburgh Abbey, would but remember this, and bring the recollection home!

Gentlemen, I thank you again, and once again, and many times to that. You have given me a new reason for remembering this day, which is already one of mark in my calendar, it being my birthday; and you have given those who are nearest and dearest to me a new reason for recollecting it with pride and interest. Heaven knows that, although I should grow ever so grey, I shall need nothing to remind me of this epoch in my life. But I am glad to think that from this time you are inseparably connected with every recurrence of this day; and that on its periodical return, I shall always, in imagination, have the unfading pleasure of entertaining you as my guests, in return for the gratification you have afforded me to-night.

IV

New York, February 18, 1842

[At a dinner presided over by Washington Irving, when nearly eight hundred of the most distinguished citizens of New York were present. "Charles Dickens, the Literary Guest of the Nation," was proffered as a sentiment by the chairman.]

Gentlemen, — I don't know how to thank you — I really don't know how. You would naturally suppose that my former experience would have given me this power, and that the difficulties in my way would have been diminished; but I assure you the fact is exactly the reverse, and I have completely baulked the ancient proverb that "a rolling stone gathers no moss;" and in my progress to this city I have collected such a weight of obligations and acknowledgment — I have picked up such an enormous mass of fresh moss at every point, and was so struck by the brilliant scenes of Monday night, that I thought I could never by any possibility grow any bigger. I

have made, continually, new accumulations to such an extent that I am compelled to stand still, and can roll no more!

Gentlemen, we learn from the authorities, that, when fairy stones, or balls, or rolls of thread, stopped of their own accord — as I do not — it presaged some great catastrophe near at hand. The precedent holds good in this case. When I have remembered the short time I have before me to spend in this land of mighty interests, and the poor opportunity I can at best have of acquiring a knowledge of and forming an acquaintance with it, I have felt it almost a duty to decline the honours you so generously heap upon me, and pass more quietly among you. For Argus himself, though he had but one mouth for his hundred eyes, would have found the reception of a public entertainment once a week too much for his greatest activity; and as I would lose no scrap of the rich instruction and the delightful knowledge which meet me on every hand (and already I have gleaned a great deal from your hospitals and common jails), I have resolved to take up my staff, and go my way rejoicing, and for the future to shake hands with America, not at parties but at home; and, therefore, gentlemen, I say to-night, with a full heart, and an honest purpose, and grateful feelings, that I bear, and shall ever bear, a deep sense of your kind, your affectionate, and your noble greeting, which it is utterly impossible to convey in words. No European sky without, and no cheerful home or well-warmed room within, shall ever shut out this land from my vision. I shall often hear your words of welcome in my quiet room, and oftenest when most quiet; and shall see your faces in the blazing fire. If I should live to grow old, the scenes of this and other evenings will shine as brightly to my dull eyes fifty years hence as now; and the honours you bestow upon me shall be well remembered and paid back in my undying love, and honest endeavours for the good of my race.

Gentlemen, one other word with reference to this first person singular, and then I shall close. I came here in an open, honest, and confiding spirit, if ever man did, and because I felt a deep sympathy in your land; had I felt otherwise, I should have kept away. As I came here, and *am* here, without the least admixture of one hundredth part of one grain of base alloy, without one feeling of unworthy reference to self in any respect, I claim, in regard to the past, for the last time, my

right in reason, in truth, and in justice, to approach, as I have done on two former occasions, a question of literary interest. I claim that justice be done; and I prefer this claim as one who has a right to speak and be heard. I have only to add that I shall be as true to you as you have been to me. I recognise in your enthusiastic approval of the creatures of my fancy, your enlightened care for the happiness of the many, your tender regard for the afflicted, your sympathy for the downcast, your plans for correcting and improving the bad, and for encouraging the good; and to advance these great objects shall be, to the end of my life, my earnest endeavour, to the extent of my humble ability. Having said thus much with reference to myself, I shall have the pleasure of saying a few words with reference to somebody else.

There is in this city a gentleman who, at the reception of one of my books, — I well remember it was the "Old Curiosity Shop," — wrote to me in England a letter so generous, so affectionate, and so manly, that if I had written the book under every circumstance of disappointment, of discouragement, and difficulty, instead of the reverse, I should have found in the receipt of that letter my best and most happy reward. I answered him, and he answered me, and so we kept shaking hands autographically, as if no ocean rolled between us. I came here to this city eager to see him, and [*laying his hand upon Irving's shoulder*] here he sits! I need not tell you how happy and delighted I am to see him here to-night in this capacity.

Washington Irving! Why, gentlemen, I don't go up stairs to bed two nights out of the seven — as a very creditable witness near at hand can testify — I say I do not go to bed two nights out of the seven without taking Washington Irving under my arm; and when I don't take him, I take his own brother, Oliver Goldsmith. Washington Irving! Why, of whom but him was I thinking the other day when I came up by the Hog's Back, the Frying Pan, Hell Gate, and all these places? Why, when, not long ago, I visited Shakespeare's birthplace, and went beneath the roof where he first saw light, whose name but *his* was pointed out to me upon the wall? Washington Irving — Diedrich Knickerbocker — Geoffrey Crayon — why, where can you go that they have not been there before? Is there an English farm — is there an English stream, an Eng-

lish city, or an English country-seat, where they have not been? Is there no Bracebridge Hall in existence? Has it no ancient shades or quiet streets?

In bygone times, when Irving left that Hall, he left sitting in an old oak chair, in a small parlour of the Boar's Head, a little man with a red nose, and an oilskin hat. When I came away he was sitting there still! — not a man *like* him, but the same man — with the nose of immortal redness and the hat of an undying glaze! Crayon, while there, was on terms of intimacy with a certain radical fellow, who used to go about, with a hatful of newspapers, woefully out at elbows, and with a coat of great antiquity. Why, gentlemen, I know that man — Tibbles the elder, and he has not changed a hair; and when I came away, he charged me to give his best respects to Washington Irving!

Leaving the town and the rustic life of England — forgetting this man, if we can — putting out of mind the country churchyard and the broken heart — let us cross the water again, and ask who has associated himself most closely with the Italian peasantry and the bandits of the Pyrenees? When the traveller enters his little chamber beyond the Alps — listening to the dim echoes of the long passages and spacious corridors — damp, and gloomy, and cold — as he hears the tempest beating with fury against his window, and gazes at the curtains, dark, and heavy, and covered with mould — and when all the ghost-stories that ever were told come up before him — amid all his thick-coming fancies, whom does he think of? Washington Irving.

Go farther still: go to the Moorish fountains, sparkling full in the moonlight — go among the water-carriers and the village gossips, living still as in days of old — and who has travelled among them before you, and peopled the Alhambra and made eloquent its shadows? Who awakes there a voice from every hill and in every cavern, and bids legends, which for centuries have slept a dreamless sleep, or watched unwinkingly, start up and pass before you in all their life and glory?

But leaving this again, who embarked with Columbus upon his gallant ship, traversed with him the dark and mighty ocean, leaped upon the land, and planted there the flag of Spain, but this same man, now sitting by my side? And being here at home again, who is a more fit companion for money-diggers?

and what pen but his has made Rip Van Winkle, playing at nine-pins on that thundering afternoon, as much part and parcel of the Catskill Mountains as any tree or crag that they can boast?

But these are topics familiar from my boyhood, and which I am apt to pursue; and lest I should be tempted now to talk too long about them, I will, in conclusion, give you a sentiment, most appropriate, I am sure, in the presence of such writers as Bryant, Halleck, and — but I suppose I must not mention the ladies here —

THE LITERATURE OF AMERICA.

She well knows how to do honour to her own literature and to that of other lands, when she chooses Washington Irving for her representative in the country of Cervantes.

V

BIRMINGHAM, FEBRUARY 28, 1844

[The following speech was delivered at a Conversazione, in aid of the funds of the Birmingham Polytechnic Institution, at which Mr. Dickens presided.]

YOU will think it very unwise, or very self-denying in me, in such an assembly, in such a splendid scene, and after such a welcome, to congratulate myself on having nothing new to say to you; but I do so, notwithstanding. To say nothing of places nearer home, I had the honour of attending at Manchester, shortly before Christmas, and at Liverpool, only the night before last, for a purpose similar to that which brings you together this evening; and looking down a short perspective of similar engagements, I feel gratification at the thought that I shall very soon have nothing at all to say; in which case, I shall be content to stake my reputation, like the Spectator of Addison, and that other great periodical speaker, the Speaker of the House of Commons, on my powers of listening.

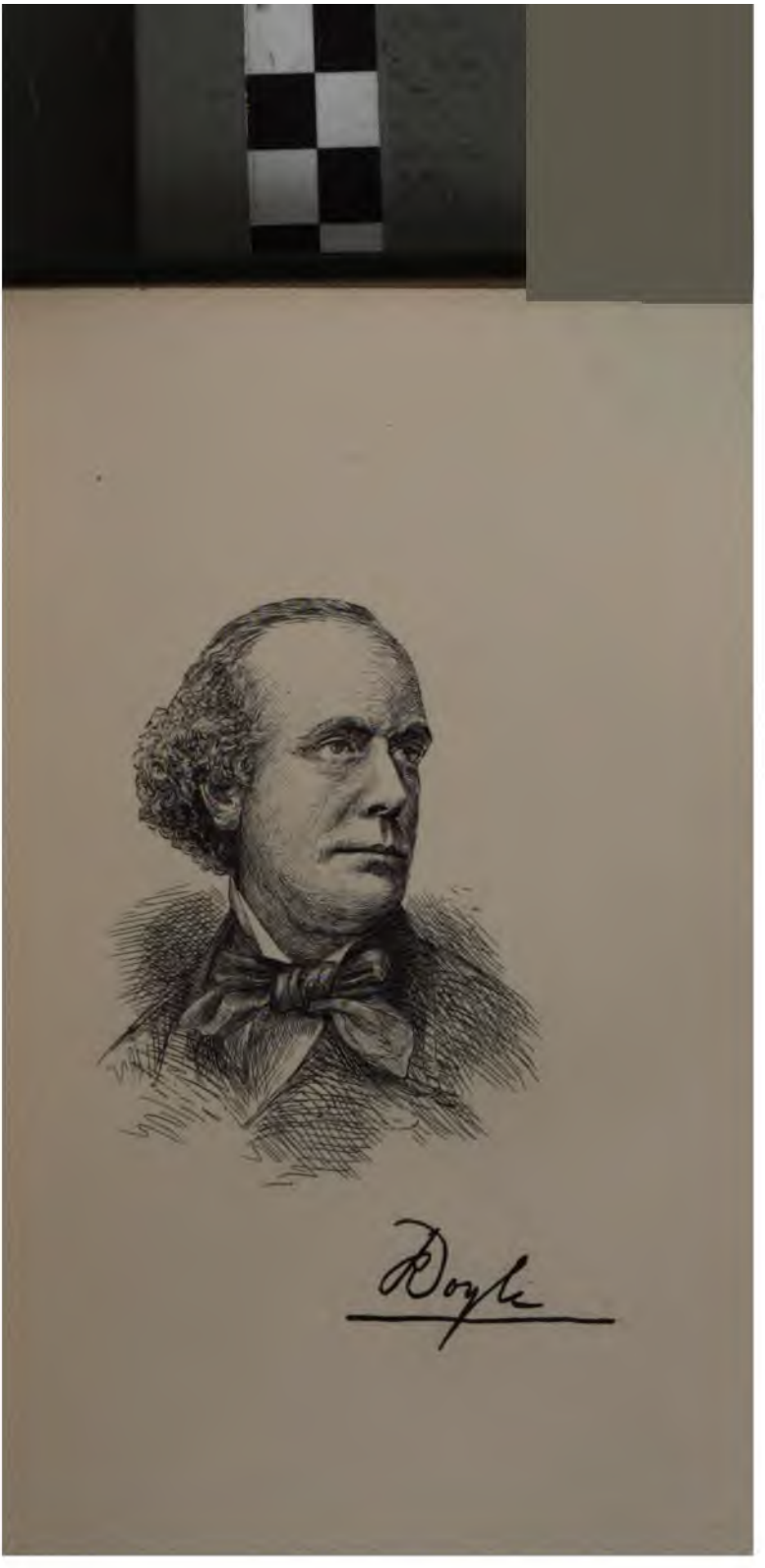
This feeling and the earnest reception I have met with are not the only reasons why I feel a genuine, cordial, and peculiar interest in this night's proceedings. The Polytechnic Institution of Birmingham is in its infancy — struggling into life under all those adverse and disadvantageous circumstances which, to a

greater or less extent, naturally beset all infancy; but I would much rather connect myself with it now, however humble, in its days of difficulty and of danger, than look back on its origin when it may have become strong, and rich, and powerful. I should prefer an intimate association with it now, in its early days and apparent struggles, to becoming its advocate and acquaintance, its fair-weather friend, in its high and palmy days. I would rather be able to say I knew it in its swaddling-clothes than in maturer age. Its two elder brothers have grown old and died: their chests were weak — about their cradles nurses shook their heads, and gossips groaned; but the present institution shot up, amidst the ruin of those which have fallen, with an indomitable constitution, with vigorous and with steady pulse; temperate, wise, and of good repute; and by perseverance it has become a very giant. Birmingham is, in my mind and in the minds of most men, associated with many giants; and I no more believe that this young institution will turn out sickly, dwarfish, or of stunted growth, than I do that when the glass slipper of my chairmanship shall fall off, and the clock strike twelve to-night, this hall will be turned into a pumpkin. I found that strong belief upon the splendid array of grace and beauty by which I am surrounded, and which, if it only had one hundredth part of the effect upon others it has upon me, could do anything it pleased with anything and anybody. I found my strong conviction, in the second place, upon the public spirit of the town of Birmingham — upon the name and fame of its capitalists and working-men; upon the greatness and importance of its merchants and manufacturers; upon its inventions, which are constantly in progress; upon the skill and intelligence of its artisans, which are daily developed; and the increasing knowledge of all portions of the community. All these reasons lead me to the conclusion that your institution will advance — that it will and must progress, and you will not be content with lingering leagues behind.

I have another peculiar ground of satisfaction in connection with the object of this assembly; and it is, that the resolutions about to be proposed do not contain in themselves anything of a sectarian or class nature; that they do not confine themselves to any one single institution, but assert the great and omnipotent principles of comprehensive education everywhere and under every circumstance. I beg leave to say that I concur,

heart and hand, in those principles, and will do all in my power for their advancement; for I hold, in accordance with the imperfect knowledge which I possess, that it is impossible for any fabric of society to go on day after day, and year after year, from father to son, and from grandfather to grandson, punishing men for not engaging in the pursuit of virtue and for the practice of crime, without showing them what virtue is, and where it best can be found — in justice, religion, and truth. The only reason that can possibly be adduced against it is one founded on fiction — namely, the case where an obdurate old genie, in the "Arabian Nights," was bound upon taking the life of a merchant, because he had struck out the eye of his invisible son. I recollect, likewise, a tale in the same book of charming fancies, which I consider not inappropriate: it is a case where a powerful spirit has been imprisoned at the bottom of the sea, in a casket with a leaden cover, and the seal of Solomon upon it; there he had lain neglected for many centuries, and during that period had made many different vows: at first, that he would reward magnificently those who should release him; and at last, that he would destroy them. Now, there is a spirit of great power — the Spirit of Ignorance — which is shut up in a vessel of leaden composition, and sealed with the seal of many, many Solomons, and which is effectually in the same position: release it in time, and it will bless, restore, and reanimate society; but let it lie under the rolling waves of years, and its blind revenge is sure to lead to certain destruction. That there are classes which, if rightly treated, constitute strength, and if wrongly, weakness, I hold it impossible to deny — by these classes I mean industrious, intelligent, and honourably independent men, in whom the higher classes of Birmingham are especially interested, and bound to afford them the means of instruction and improvement, and to ameliorate their mental and moral condition. Far be it from me (and I wish to be most particularly understood) to attempt to depreciate the excellent Church Instruction Societies, or the worthy, sincere, and temperate zeal of those reverend gentlemen by whom they are usually conducted; on the contrary, I believe that they have done, and are doing, much good, and are deserving of high praise; but I hope that, without offence, in a community such as Birmingham, there are other objects not unworthy in the sight of heaven, and objects of recognised utility which are

worthy of support — principles which are practised in word and deed in Polytechnic Institutions — principles for the diffusion of which honest men of all degrees and of every creed might associate together, on an independent footing and on neutral ground, and at a small expense, for the better understanding and the greater consideration of each other, and for the better cultivation of the happiness of all: for it surely cannot be allowed that those who labour day by day, surrounded by machinery, shall be permitted to degenerate into machines themselves, but, on the contrary, they should assert their common origin from their Creator, at the hands of those who are responsible and thinking men. There is, indeed, no difference in the main with respect to the dangers of ignorance and the advantages of knowledge between those who hold different opinions — for it is to be observed, that those who are most distrustful of the advantages of education, are always the first to exclaim against the results of ignorance. This fact was pleasantly illustrated on the railway, as I came here. In the same carriage with me there sat an ancient gentleman (I feel no delicacy in alluding to him, for I know that he is not in the room, having got out far short of Birmingham), who expressed himself most mournfully as to the ruinous effects and rapid spread of railways, and was most pathetic upon the virtues of the slow-going old stage-coaches. Now I, entertaining some little lingering kindness for the road, made shift to express my concurrence with the old gentleman's opinion, without any great compromise of principle. Well, we got on tolerably comfortably together, and when the engine, with a frightful screech, dived into some dark abyss, like some strange aquatic monster, the old gentleman said it would never do, and I agreed with him. When it parted from each successive station, with a shock and a shriek as if it had had a double tooth drawn, the old gentleman shook his head, and I shook mine. When he burst forth against such new-fangled notions, and said no good could come of them, I did not contest the point. But I found that when the speed of the engine was abated, or there was a prolonged stay at any station, up the old gentleman was at arms, and his watch was instantly out of his pocket, denouncing the slowness of our progress. Now I could not help comparing this old gentleman to that ingenious class of persons who are in the constant habit of declaiming against the vices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and crimes of society, and at the same time are the first and foremost to assert that vice and crime have not their common origin in ignorance and discontent.

The good work, however, in spite of all political and party differences, has been well begun; we are all interested in it; it is advancing, and cannot be stopped by any opposition, although it may be retarded in this place or in that by the indifference of the middle classes, with whom its successful progress chiefly rests. Of this success I cannot entertain a doubt; for whenever the working classes have enjoyed an opportunity of effectually rebutting accusations which falsehood or thoughtlessness has brought against them, they always avail themselves of it, and show themselves in their true characters; and it was this which made the damage done to a single picture in the National Gallery of London, by some poor lunatic or cripple, a mere matter of newspaper notoriety and wonder for some few days. This, then, establishes a fact evident to the meanest comprehension — that any given number of thousands of individuals, in the humblest walks of life in this country, can pass through the national galleries or museums in seasons of holiday-making, without damaging, in the slightest degree, those choice and valuable collections. I do not myself believe that the working classes ever were the wanton or mischievous persons they were so often and so long represented to be; but I rather incline to the opinion that some men take it into their heads to lay it down as a matter of fact, without being particular about the premises; and that the idle and the prejudiced, not wishing to have the trouble of forming opinions for themselves, take it for granted — until the people have an opportunity of disproving the stigma and vindicating themselves before the world.

Now this assertion is well illustrated by what occurred respecting an equestrian statue in the metropolis, with respect to which a legend existed that the sculptor hanged himself, because he had neglected to put a girth to the horse. This story was currently believed for many years, until it was inspected for altogether a different purpose, and it was found to have had a girth all the time.

But surely if, as is stated, the people are ill-disposed and mischievous, that is the best reason that can be offered for teaching them better; and if they are not, surely that is a reason for giving them every opportunity of vindicating their

injured reputation; and no better opportunity could possibly be afforded than that of associating together voluntarily for such high purposes as it is proposed to carry out by the establishment of the Birmingham Polytechnic Institution. In any case — nay, in every case — if we would reward honesty, if we would hold out encouragement to good, if we would eradicate that which is evil or correct that which is bad, education — comprehensive, liberal education — is the one thing needful, and the only effective end. If I might apply to my purpose, and turn into plain prose some words of Hamlet — not with reference to any government or party (for party being, for the most part, an irrational sort of thing, has no connection with the object we have in view) — if I might apply those words to education as Hamlet applied them to the skull of Yorick, I would say — "Now hie thee to the council-chamber, and tell them, though they lay it on in sounding thoughts and learned words an inch thick, to this complexion they must come at last."

VI

LONDON, APRIL 6, 1846

[Mr. Dickens took the chair at the first anniversary festival of the General Theatrical Fund Association, at the London Tavern.]

GENTLEMEN, — In offering to you a toast which has not as yet been publicly drunk in any company, it becomes incumbent on me to offer a few words in explanation: in the first place, premising that the toast will be "The General Theatrical Fund."

The Association, whose anniversary we celebrate to-night, was founded seven years ago, for the purpose of granting permanent pensions to such of the *corps dramatique* as had retired from the stage, either from a decline in their years or a decay of their powers. Collected within the scope of its benevolence are all actors and actresses, singers, or dancers, of five years' standing in the profession. To relieve their necessities and to protect them from want is the great end of the Society, and it is good to know that for seven years the members of it have steadily, patiently, quietly and perseveringly pursued this end, advancing by regular contribution, moneys which many of them could ill afford, and cheered by no external help or assistance

of any kind whatsoever. It has thus served a regular apprenticeship, but I trust that we shall establish to-night that its time is out, and that henceforth the Fund will enter upon a flourishing and brilliant career.

I have no doubt that you are all aware that there are, and were when this institution was founded, two other institutions existing of a similar nature — Covent Garden and Drury Lane — both of long standing, both richly endowed. It cannot, however, be too distinctly understood, that the present institution is not in any way adverse to those. How can it be when it is only a wide and broad extension of all that is most excellent in the principles on which they are founded? That such an extension was absolutely necessary was sufficiently proved by the fact that the great body of the dramatic corps were excluded from the benefits conferred by a membership of either of these institutions; for it was essential, in order to become a member of the Drury Lane Society, that the applicant, either he or she, should have been engaged for three consecutive seasons as a performer. This was afterwards reduced, in the case of Covent Garden, to a period of two years, but it really is as exclusive in one way as the other, for I need not tell you that Covent Garden is now but a vision of the past. You might play the bottle conjurer with its dramatic company and put them all into a pint bottle. The human voice is rarely heard within its walls save in connection with corn, or the ambidextrous prestidigitation of the Wizard of the North. In like manner, Drury Lane is conducted now with almost a sole view to the opera and ballet, insomuch that the statue of Shakespeare over the door serves as emphatically to point out his grave as his bust did in the church of Stratford-upon-Avon. How can the profession generally hope to qualify for the Drury Lane or Covent Garden institution, when the oldest and most distinguished members have been driven from the boards on which they have earned their reputations, to delight the town in theatres to which the General Theatrical Fund alone extended?

I will again repeat that I attach no reproach to those other funds, with which I have had the honour of being connected at different periods of my life. At the time those associations were established, an engagement at one of those theatres was almost a matter of course, and a successful engagement would last a whole life; but an engagement of two months' duration

at Covent Garden would be a perfect Old Parr of an engagement just now. It should never be forgotten that when those two funds were established, the two great theatres were protected by patent, and that at that time the minor theatres were condemned by law to the representation of the most preposterous nonsense, and some gentlemen whom I see around me could no more belong to the minor theatres of that day than they could now belong to St. Bartholomew fair.

As I honour the two old funds for the great good which they have done, so I honour this for the much greater good it is resolved to do. It is not because I love them less, but because I love this more — because it includes more in its operation.

Let us ever remember that there is no class of actors who stand so much in need of a retiring fund as those who do not win the great prizes, but who are nevertheless an essential part of the theatrical system, and by consequence bear a part in contributing to our pleasures. We owe them a debt which we ought to pay. The beds of such men are not of roses, but of very artificial flowers indeed. Their lives are lives of care and privation, and hard struggles with very stern realities. It is from among the poor actors who drink wine from goblets, in colour marvellously like toast and water, and who preside at Barmecide feasts with wonderful appetites for steaks, — it is from their ranks that the most triumphant favourites have sprung. And surely, besides this, the greater the instruction and delight we derive from the rich English drama, the more we are bound to succour and protect the humblest of those votaries of the art who add to our instruction and amusement.

Hazlitt has well said that "there is no class of society whom so many persons regard with affection as actors. We greet them on the stage, we like to meet them in the streets; they almost always recall to us pleasant associations."[1] When they have strutted and fretted their hour upon the stage, let them not be heard no more — but let them be heard sometimes to say that they are happy in their old age. When they have passed for the last time from behind that glittering row of lights with which we are all familiar, let them not pass away into gloom and darkness, — but let them pass into cheerfulness and light — into a contented and happy home.

[1] Hazlitt's *Round Table* (Edinburgh, 1817, vol. ii. p. 242), § *On Actors and Acting*.

This is the object for which we have met; and I am too familiar with the English character not to know that it will be effected. When we come suddenly in a crowded street upon the careworn features of a familiar face — crossing us like the ghost of pleasant hours long forgotten — let us not recall those features with pain, in sad remembrance of what they once were, but let us in joy recognise it, and go back a pace or two to meet it once again, as that of a friend who has beguiled us of a moment of care, who has taught us to sympathise with virtuous grief, cheating us to tears for sorrows not our own — and we all know how pleasant are such tears. Let such a face be ever remembered as that of our benefactor and our friend.

I tried to recollect, in coming here, whether I had ever been in any theatre in my life from which I had not brought away some pleasant association, however poor the theatre, and I protest, out of my varied experience, I could not remember even one from which I had not brought some favourable impression, and that, commencing with the period when I believed the clown was a being born into the world with infinite pockets, and ending with that in which I saw the other night, outside one of the "Royal Saloons," a playbill which showed me ships completely rigged, carrying men, and careering over boundless and tempestuous oceans. And now, bespeaking your kindest remembrance of our theatres and actors, I beg to propose that you drink as heartily and freely as ever a toast was drunk in this toast-drinking city, "Prosperity to the General Theatrical Fund."

VII

Glasgow, December 28, 1847

[Mr. Dickens presided at the first Soirée, commemorative of the opening of the Glasgow Athenæum.]

Ladies and Gentlemen, — Let me begin by endeavouring to convey to you the assurance that not even the warmth of your reception can possibly exceed, in simple earnestness, the cordiality of the feeling with which I come amongst you. This beautiful scene and your generous greeting would naturally awaken, under any circumstances, no common feeling within me; but when I connect them with the high purpose of this brilliant assembly — when I regard it as an educational example

and encouragement to the rest of Scotland — when I regard it no less as a recognition on the part of everybody here of the right, indisputable and inalienable, of all those who are actively engaged in the work and business of life to elevate and improve themselves so far as in them lies, by all good means — I feel as if I stand here to swear brotherhood to all the young men in Glasgow; — and I may say to all the young women in Glasgow; being unfortunately in no position to take any tenderer vows upon myself — and as if we were pledged from this time henceforth to make common cause together in one of the most laudable and worthy of human objects.

Ladies and gentlemen, a common cause must be made in such a design as that which brings us together this night; for without it nothing can be done, but with it everything. It is a common cause of right, God knows; for it is idle to suppose that the advantages of such an institution as the Glasgow Athenæum will stop within its own walls or be confined to its own members. Through all the society of this great and important city, upwards to the highest and downwards to the lowest, it must, I know, be felt for good. Downward in a clearer perception of, and sympathy with, those social miseries which can be alleviated, and those wide-open doors to vice and crime that can be shut and barred; and upward in a greater intelligence, increased efficiency, and higher knowledge, of all who partake of its benefits themselves, or who communicate, as all must do, in a greater or less degree, some portion to the circle of relatives or friends in which they move.

Nor, ladies and gentlemen, would I say for any man, however high his social position, or however great his attainments, that he might not find something to be learnt even from immediate contact with such institutions. If he only saw the goddess Knowledge coming out of her secluded palaces and high places to mingle with the throng, and to give them shining glimpses of the delights which were long kept hoarded up, he might learn something. If he only saw the energy and the courage with which those who earn their daily bread by the labour of their hands or heads, come night after night, as to a recreation, to that which was, perhaps, the whole absorbing business of his youth, there might still be something very wholesome for him to learn. But when he could see in such places their genial and reviving influences, their substituting of the contemplation

of the beauties of nature and art, and of the wisdom of great men, for mere sensual enjoyment or stupid idleness — at any rate he would learn this — that it is at once the duty and the interest of all good members of society to encourage and protect them.

I took occasion to say at an Athenæum in Yorkshire a few weeks since, and I think it a point most important to be borne in mind on such commemorations as these, that when such societies are objected to, or are decried on the ground that, in the views of the objectors, education among the people has not succeeded, the term education is used with not the least reference to its real meaning, and is wholly misunderstood. Mere reading and writing is not education; it would be quite as reasonable to call bricks and mortar architecture — oils and colours art — reeds and cat-gut music — or the child's spelling-books the works of Shakespeare, Milton, or Bacon — as to call the lowest rudiments of education, education, and to visit on that most abused and slandered word their failure in any instance; and precisely because they were not education; because, generally speaking, the word has been understood in that sense a great deal too long; because education for the business of life, and for the due cultivation of domestic virtues, is at least as important from day to day to the grown person as to the child; because real education, in the strife and contention for a livelihood, and the consequent necessity incumbent on a great number of young persons to go into the world when they are very young, is extremely difficult. It is because of these things that I look upon mechanics' institutions and athenæums as vitally important to the well-being of society. It is because the rudiments of education may there be turned to good account in the acquisition of sound principles, and of the great virtues, hope, faith, and charity, to which all our knowledge tends; it is because of that, I take it, that you have met in education's name to-night.

It is a great satisfaction to me to occupy the place I do in behalf of an infant institution; a remarkably fine child enough, of a vigorous constitution, but an infant still. I esteem myself singularly fortunate in knowing it before its prime, in the hope that I may have the pleasure of remembering in its prime, and when it has attained to its lusty maturity, that I was a friend of its youth. It has already passed through some of the dis-

orders to which children are liable; it succeeded to an elder brother of a very meritorious character, but of rather a weak constitution, and which expired when about twelve months old, from, it is said, a destructive habit of getting up early in the morning: it succeeded this elder brother, and has fought manfully through a sea of troubles. Its friends have often been much concerned for it; its pulse has been exceedingly low, being only 1250, when it was expected to have been 10,000; several relations and friends have even gone so far as to walk off once or twice, in the melancholy belief that it was dead. Through all that, assisted by the indomitable energy of one or two nurses, to whom it can never be sufficiently grateful, it came triumphantly, and now, of all the youthful members of its family I ever saw, it has the strongest attitude, the healthiest look, the brightest and most cheerful air. I find the institution nobly lodged; I find it with a reading-room, a coffee-room, and a news-room; I find it with lectures given and in progress, in sound, useful, and well-selected subjects; I find it with morning and evening classes for mathematics, logic, grammar, music, French, German, Spanish, and Italian, attended by upwards of five hundred persons; but best and first of all, and what is to me more satisfactory than anything else in the history of the institution, I find that all this has been mainly achieved by the young men of Glasgow themselves, with very little assistance. And, ladies and gentlemen, as the axiom, "Heaven helps those who help themselves," is truer in no case than it is in this, I look to the young men of Glasgow, from such a past and such a present, to a noble future. Everything that has been done in any other athenæum, I confidently expect to see done here; and when that shall be the case, and when there shall be great cheap schools in connection with the institution, and when it has bound together for ever all its friends, and brought over to itself all those who look upon it as an objectionable institution, — then, and not till then, I hope the young men of Glasgow will rest from their labours, and think their study done.

If the young men of Glasgow want any stimulus or encouragement in this wise, they have one beside them in the presence of their fair townswomen, which is irresistible. It is a most delightful circumstance to me, and one fraught with inestimable benefits to institutions of this kind, that at a meeting of this nature those who in all things are our best examples, encour-

agers, and friends, are not excluded. The abstract idea of the Graces was in ancient times associated with those arts which refine the human understanding; and it is pleasant to see now, in the rolling of the world, the Graces popularising the practice of those arts by their example, and adorning it with their presence.

I am happy to know that in the Glasgow Athenæum there is a peculiar bond of union between the institution and the fairest part of creation. I understand that the necessary addition to the small library of books being difficult and expensive to make, the ladies have generally resolved to hold a fancy bazaar, and to devote the proceeds to this admirable purpose; and I learn with no less pleasure that her Majesty the Queen, in a graceful and womanly sense of the excellence of this design, has consented that the bazaar shall be held under her royal patronage. I can only say, that if you do not find something very noble in your books after this, you are much duller students than I take you to be. The ladies, — the single ladies, at least, — however disinterested I know they are by sex and nature, will, I hope, resolve to have some of the advantages of these books, by never marrying any but members of the Athenæum. It seems to me it ought to be the pleasantest library in the world.

Hazlitt says, in speaking of some of the graceful fancies of some familiar writer of fiction, "How long since I first became acquainted with these characters; what old-fashioned friends they seem; and yet I am not tired of them like so many other friends, nor they of me." In this case the books will not only possess all the attractions of their own friendships and charms, but also the manifold — I may say womanfold — associations connected with their donors. I can imagine how, in fact, from these fanciful associations, some fair Glasgow widow may be taken for the remoter one whom Sir Roger de Coverley could not forget; I can imagine how Sophia's muff may be seen and loved, but not by Tom Jones, going down the High-street on any winter day; or I can imagine the student finding in every fair form the exact counterpart of the Glasgow Athenæum, and taking into consideration the history of Europe without the consent of Sheriff Alison. I can imagine, in short, how through all the facts and fictions of this library, these ladies will be always active, and that

"Age will not wither them, nor custom stale
Their infinite variety."

It seems to me to be a moral, delightful, and happy chance, that this meeting has been held at this genial season of the year, when a new time is, as it were, opening before us, and when we celebrate the birth of that divine and blessed Teacher, who took the highest knowledge into the humblest places, and whose great system comprehended all mankind. I hail it as a most auspicious omen, at this time of the year, when many scattered friends and families are reassembled, for the members of this institution to be calling men together from all quarters, with a brotherly view to the general good, and a view to the general improvement; as I consider that such designs are practically worthy of the faith we hold, and a practical remembrance of the words, "On earth peace, and good-will toward men." I hope that every year which dawns on your Institution will find it richer in its means of usefulness, and greyer-headed in the honour and respect it has gained. It can hardly speak for itself more appropriately than in the words of an English writer, when contemplating the English emblem of this period of the year, the holly-tree: —

[Mr. Dickens concluded by quoting the last three stanzas of Southey's poem *The Holly-Tree*.]

VIII

London, March 1, 1851

[At a public dinner given to Macready, Sir E. B. Lytton was in the chair.]

Gentlemen, — After all you have already heard, and so rapturously received, I assure you that not even the warmth of your kind welcome would embolden me to hope to interest you if I had not full confidence in the subject I have to offer to your notice. But my reliance on the strength of this appeal to you is so strong that I am rather encouraged than daunted by the brightness of the track on which I have to throw my little shadow.

Gentlemen, as it seems to me, there are three great requisites essential to the perfect realisation of a scene so unusual and so splendid as that in which we are now assembled. The first, and I must say very difficult, requisite is a man possessing the

stronghold in the general remembrance, the indisputable claim on the general regard and esteem, which is possessed by my dear and much valued friend our guest. The second requisite is the presence of a body of entertainers, — a great multitude of hosts so cheerful and good-humoured (under, I am sorry to say, some personal inconvenience), so warm-hearted and so nobly in earnest, as those whom I have the privilege of addressing. The third, and certainly not the least of these requisites, is a president who, less by his social position, which he may claim by inheritance, or by fortune, which may have been adventitiously won, and may be again accidentally lost, than by his comprehensive genius, shall fitly represent the best part of him to whom honour is done, and the best part of those who unite in the doing of it. Such a president I think we have found in our chairman of to-night, and I need scarcely add that our chairman's health is the toast I have to propose to you.

Many of those who now hear me were present, I dare say, at that memorable scene on Wednesday night last,[1] when the great vision which had been a delight and a lesson — very often, I dare say, a support and a comfort to you, which had for many years improved and charmed us, and to which we had looked for an elevated relief from the labours of our lives — faded from our sight for ever. I will not stop to inquire whether our guest may or may not have looked backward, through rather too long a period for us, to some remote and distant time when he might possibly bear some far-off likeness to a certain Spanish archbishop whom Gil Blas once served. Nor will I stop to inquire whether it was a reasonable disposition in the audience of Wednesday to seize upon the words : —

> "And I have bought
> Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
> Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
> Not cast aside so soon — "[2]

but I will venture to intimate to those whom I am addressing how in my mind I mainly connect that occasion with the present. When I looked round on the vast assemblage, and observed the huge pit hushed into stillness on the rising of the curtain, and that mighty surging gallery, where men in their

[1] Mr. Macready's Farewell Benefit at Drury Lane Theatre, on which occasion he played the part of Macbeth.

[2] *Macbeth*, Act I., sc. 7.

shirt-sleeves had been striking out their arms like strong swimmers — when I saw that boisterous human flood become still water in a moment, and remain so from the opening to the end of the play, it suggested to me something besides the trustworthiness of an English crowd, and the delusion under which those labour who are apt to disparage and malign it: it suggested to me that in meeting here to-night we undertook to represent something of the all-pervading feeling of that crowd, through all its intermediate degrees, from the full-dressed lady, with her diamonds sparkling upon her breast, in the proscenium-box, to the half-undressed gentleman, who bides his time to take some refreshment in the back row of the gallery. And I consider, gentlemen, that no one who could possibly be placed in this chair could so well head that comprehensive representation, and could so well give the crowning grace to our festivities, as one whose comprehensive genius has in his various works embraced them all, and who has, in his dramatic genius, enchanted and enthralled them all at once.

Gentlemen, it is not for me here to recall, after what you have heard this night, what I have seen and known in the bygone times of Mr. Macready's management, of the strong friendship of Sir Bulwer Lytton for him, of the association of his pen with his earliest successes, or of Mr. Macready's zealous and untiring services; but it may be permitted me to say what in any public mention of him I can never repress, that in the path we both tread I have uniformly found him from the first the most generous of men; quick to encourage, slow to disparage, ever anxious to assert the order of which he is so great an ornament; never condescending to shuffle it off, and leave it outside state rooms, as a Mussulman might leave his slippers outside a mosque.

There is a popular prejudice, a kind of superstition, to the effect that authors are not a particularly united body, that they are not invariably and inseparably attached to each other. I am afraid I must concede half a grain or so of truth to that superstition; but this I know, that there can hardly be — that there hardly can have been — among the followers of literature, a man of more high standing, farther above these little grudging jealousies, which do sometimes disparage its brightness, than

* Edward Bulwer Lytton.

and I have the strongest reason just at present to bear my

testimony to his great consideration for those evils which are sometimes unfortunately attendant upon it, though not on him. For in conjunction with some other gentlemen now present, I have just embarked in a design with Sir Bulwer Lytton, to smooth the rugged way of young labourers, both in literature and the fine arts, and to soften, but by no eleemosynary means, the declining years of meritorious age. And if that project prosper as I hope it will, and as I know it ought, it will one day be an honour to England where there is now a reproach; originating in his sympathies, being brought into operation by his activity, and endowed from its very cradle by his generosity. There are many among you who will have each his own favourite reason for drinking our chairman's health, resting his claim probably upon some of his diversified successes. According to the nature of your reading, some of you will connect him with prose, others will connect him with poetry. One will connect him with comedy, and another with the romantic passions of the stage, and his assertion of worthy ambition and earnest struggle against

> "those twin gaolers of the human heart,
> Low birth and iron fortune."

Again, another's taste will lead him to the contemplation of Rienzi and the streets of Rome; another's to the rebuilt and repeopled streets of Pompeii; another's to the touching history of the fireside where the Caxton family learned how to discipline their natures and tame their wild hopes down. But however various their feelings and reasons may be, I am sure that with one accord each will help the other, and all will swell the greeting, with which I shall now propose to you, "The Health of our Chairman, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton."

IX

London, April 14, 1851

[Mr. Dickens presided at the Sixth Annual Dinner of the General Theatrical Fund at the London Tavern.]

I have so often had the satisfaction of bearing my testimony, in this place, to the usefulness of the excellent Institution in whose behalf we are assembled, that I should be really sensible of the disadvantage of having now nothing to say in propos-

ing the toast you all anticipate, if I were not well assured that there is really nothing which needs be said. I have to appeal to you on the old grounds, and no ingenuity of mine could render those grounds of greater weight than they have hitherto successfully proved to you.

Although the General Theatrical Fund Association, unlike many other public societies and endowments, is represented by no building, whether of stone, or brick, or glass, like that astonishing evidence of the skill and energy of my friend Mr. Paxton, which all the world is now called upon to admire, and the great merit of which as you learn from the best authorities is, that it ought to have fallen down long before it was built, and yet that it would by no means consent to doing so — although, I say, this Association possesses no architectural home, it is nevertheless as plain a fact, rests on as solid a foundation, and carries as erect a front, as any building in the world. And the best and the utmost that its exponent and its advocate can do, standing here, is to point it out to those who gather round it, and to say, "Judge for yourselves."

It may not, however, be improper for me to suggest to that portion of the company whose previous acquaintance with it may have been limited, what it is not. It is not a theatrical association whose benefits are confined to a small and exclusive body of actors. It is a society whose claims are always preferred in the name of the whole histrionic art. It is not a theatrical association adapted to a state of theatrical things entirely past and gone, and no more suited to present theatrical requirements than a string of pack-horses would be suited to the conveyance of traffic between London and Birmingham. It is not a rich old gentleman, with the gout in his vitals, brushed and got up once a year to look as vigorous as possible, and brought out for a public airing by the few survivors of a large family of nephews and nieces, who afterwards double-lock the street door upon the poor relations. It is not a theatrical association which insists that no actor can share its bounty who has not walked so many years on those boards where the English tongue is never heard — between the little bars of music in an aviary of singing birds, to which the unwieldy Swan of Avon is never admitted — that bounty which was gathered in the name and for the elevation of an all-embracing art.

No, if there be such things, this thing is not of that kind.

This is a theatrical association, expressly adapted to the wants and to the means of the whole theatrical profession all over England. It is a society in which the word exclusiveness is wholly unknown. It is a society which includes every actor, whether he be Benedict or Hamlet, or the Ghost, or the Bandit, or the court-physician, or, in the one person, the whole King's army. He may do the "light business," or the "heavy," or the comic, or the eccentric. He may be the captain who courts the young lady, whose uncle still unaccountably persists in dressing himself in a costume one hundred years older than his time. Or he may be the young lady's brother in the white gloves and inexpressibles, whose duty in the family appears to be to listen to the female members of it whenever they sing, and to shake hands with everybody between all the verses. Or he may be the baron who gives the fête, and who sits uneasily on the sofa under a canopy with the baroness while the fête is going on. Or he may be the peasant at the fête who comes on the stage to swell the drinking chorus, and who, it may be observed, always turns his glass upside down before he begins to drink out of it. Or he may be the clown who takes away the door-step of the house where the evening party is going on. Or he may be the gentleman who issues out of the house, on the false alarm, and is precipitated into the area. Or, to come to the actresses, she may be the fairy who resides for ever in a revolving star with an occasional visit to a bower or a palace. Or the actor may be the armed head of the witch's cauldron; or even that extraordinary witch, concerning whom I have observed in country places, that he is much less like the notion formed from the description of Hopkins than the Malcolm or Donalbain of the previous scenes. This society, in short, says, "Be you what you may, be you actor or actress, be your path in your profession never so high, or never so low, never so haughty, or never so humble, we offer you the means of doing good to yourselves, and of doing good to your brethren."

This society is essentially a provident institution, appealing to a class of men to take care of their own interests, and giving a continuous security only in return for a continuous sacrifice and effort. The actor by the means of this society obtains his own right, to no man's wrong; and when, in old age, or in disastrous times, he makes his claim on the institution, he is enabled to say, "I am neither a beggar nor a suppliant. I am

but reaping what I sowed long ago." And therefore it is that I cannot hold out to you that in assisting this fund you are doing an act of charity in the common acceptation of that phrase. Of all the abuses of that much-abused term, none have more raised my indignation than what I have heard in this room in past times, in reference to this institution. I say, if you help this institution you will be helping the wagoner who has resolutely put his own shoulder to the wheel, and who has *not* stuck idle in the mud. In giving this aid you will be doing an act of justice, and you will be performing an act of gratitude; and this is what I solicit from you; but I will not so far wrong those who are struggling manfully for their own independence as to pretend to entreat from you an act of charity.

I have used the word gratitude; and let any man ask his own heart, and confess if he have not some grateful acknowledgments for the actor's art? Not peculiarly because it is a profession often pursued, and as it were marked, by poverty and misfortune — for other callings, God knows, have their distresses — nor because the actor has sometimes to come from scenes of sickness, of suffering, ay, even of death itself, to play his part before us — for all of us, in our spheres, have as often to do violence to our feelings and to hide our hearts in fighting this great battle of life, and in discharging our duties and responsibilities. But the art of the actor excites reflections, sombre or grotesque, awful or humorous, which we are all familiar with. If any man were to tell me that he denied his acknowledgments to the stage, I would simply put to him one question — whether he remembered his first play?

If you, gentlemen, will but carry back your recollection to that great night, and call to mind the bright and harmless world which then opened to your view, we shall, I think, hear favourably of the affect upon your liberality on this occasion from our Secretary.

[illegible] of meetings of this kind — the sixth [illegible] the child down after dinner. His nurse, [illegible] of the name of Buckstone, who has in [illegible] several places, will presently report [illegible] sound, and that his general [illegible] condition. Long may it be so; long may it [illegible] and grow; long may we meet it is my sin-

cere wish) to exchange our congratulations on its prosperity; and longer than the line of Banquo may be that line of figures which, as its patriotic share in the national debt, a century hence shall be stated by the Governor and Company of the Bank of England.

X

London, December 30, 1854

[Mr. Dickens presided at the Anniversary Dinner in commemoration of the foundation of the Commercial Travellers' School.]

I think it may be assumed that most of us here present know something about travelling. I do not mean in distant regions or foreign countries, although I dare say some of us have had experience in that way, but at home, and within the limits of the United Kingdom. I dare say most of us have had experience of the extinct "fast coaches," the "Wonders," "Taglionis," and "Tallyhos," of other days. I dare say most of us remember certain modest post-chaises, dragging us down interminable roads, through slush and mud, to little country towns with no visible population, except half a dozen men in smock-frocks, half a dozen women with umbrellas and pattens, and a washed-out dog or so shivering under the gables, to complete the desolate picture. We can all discourse, I dare say, if so minded, about our recollections of the "Talbot," the "Queen's Head," or the "Lion" of those days. We have all been to that room on the ground-floor on one side of the old inn-yard, not quite free from a certain fragrant smell of tobacco, where the cruets on the sideboard were usually absorbed by the skirts of the box-coats that hung from the wall; where awkward servants waylaid us at every turn, like so many human man-traps; where county members, framed and glazed, were eternally presenting that petition which, somehow or other, had made their glory in the county, although nothing else had ever come of it. Where the books in the windows always wanted the first, last, and middle leaves, and where the one man was always arriving at some unusual hour in the night, and requiring his breakfast at a similarly singular period of the day. I have no doubt we could all be very eloquent on the comforts of our favourite hotel, wherever it was — its beds, its stables, its vast amount of

posting, its excellent cheese, its head waiter, its capital dishes, its pigeon-pies, or its 1820 port. Or possibly we could recall our chaste and innocent admiration of its landlady, or our fraternal regard for its handsome chambermaid. A celebrated domestic critic once writing of a famous actress, renowned for her virtue and beauty, gave her the character of being an "eminently gatherable-to-one's-arms sort of person." Perhaps some one amongst us has borne a somewhat similar tribute to the mental charms of the fair deities who presided at our hotels.

With the travelling characteristics of later times, we are all, no doubt, equally familiar. We know all about that station to which we must take our ticket, although we never get there; and the other one at which we arrive after dark, certain to find it half a mile from the town, where the old road is sure to have been abolished, and the new road is going to be made — where the old neighbourhood has been tumbled down, and the new one is not half built up. We know all about that party on the platform who, with the best intentions, can do nothing for our luggage except pitch it into all sorts of unattainable places. We know all about that short omnibus, in which one is to be doubled up, to the imminent danger of the crown of one's hat; and about that fly, whose leading peculiarity is never to be there when it is wanted. We know, too, how instantaneously the lights of the station disappear when the train starts, and about that grope to the new Railway Hotel, which will be an excellent house when the customers come, but which at present has nothing to offer but a liberal allowance of damp mortar and new lime.

I record these little incidents of home travel mainly with the object of increasing your interest in the purpose of this night's assemblage. Every traveller has a home of his own, and he learns to appreciate it the more from his wandering. If he has no home, he learns the same lesson unselfishly by turning to the homes of other men. He may have his experiences of cheerful and exciting pleasures abroad; but home is the best, after all, and its pleasures are the most heartily and enduringly prized. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, every one must be prepared to learn that commercial travellers, as a body, know how to prize those domestic relations from which their pursuits so frequently sever them; for no one could possibly invent a more delightful

or more convincing testimony to the fact than they themselves have offered in founding and maintaining a school for the children of deceased or unfortunate members of their own body; those children who now appeal to you in mute but eloquent terms from the gallery.

It is to support that school, founded with such high and friendly objects, so very honourable to your calling, and so useful in its solid and practical results, that we are here to-night. It is to roof that building which is to shelter the children of your deceased friends with one crowning ornament, the best that any building can have; namely, a receipt stamp for the full amount of the cost. It is for this that your active sympathy is appealed to, for the completion of your own good work. You know how to put your hands to the plough in earnest as well as any men in existence, for this little book informs me that you raised last year no less a sum than £8000; and while fully half of that sum consisted of new donations to the building fund, I find that the regular revenue of the charity has only suffered to the extent of £30. After this, I most earnestly and sincerely say that were we all authors together, I might boast, if in my profession were exhibited the same unity and steadfastness I find in yours.

I will not urge on you the casualties of a life of travel, or the vicissitudes of business, or the claims fostered by that bond of brotherhood which ought always to exist amongst men who are united in a common pursuit. You have already recognised those claims so nobly, that I will not presume to lay them before you in any further detail. Suffice it to say that I do not think it is in your nature to do things by halves. I do not think you could do so if you tried, and I have a moral certainty that you never will try. To those gentlemen present who are not members of the travellers' body, I will say, in the words of the French proverb, "Heaven helps those who help themselves." The Commercial Travellers having helped themselves so gallantly, it is clear that the visitors who come as a sort of celestial representatives ought to bring that aid in their pockets which the precept teaches us to expect from them. With these few remarks, I beg to give you as a toast, "Success to the Commercial Travellers' School."

XI

London, May 20, 1865

[Mr. Dickens was chairman at the Second Annual Dinner of the Newspaper Press Fund.]

Ladies and Gentlemen, — When a young child is produced after dinner to be shown to a circle of admiring relations and friends, it may generally be observed that their conversation — I suppose in an instinctive remembrance of the uncertainty of infant life — takes a retrospective turn. As how much the child has grown since the last dinner; what a remarkably fine child it is, to have been born only two or three years ago; how much stronger it looks now than before it had the measles, and so forth. When a young institution is produced after dinner, there is not the same uncertainty or delicacy as in the case of the child, and it may be confidently predicted of it that if it deserve to live it will surely live, and that if it deserve to die it will surely die. The proof of desert in such a case as this must be mainly sought, I suppose, firstly, in what the society means to do with its money; secondly, in the extent to which it is supported by the class with whom it originated, and for whose benefit it is designed; and, lastly, in the power of its hold upon the public. I add this lastly, because no such institution that ever I heard of ever yet dreamed of existing apart from the public, or ever yet considered it a degradation to accept the public support.

Now, what the Newspaper Press Fund proposes to do with its money is to grant relief to members in want or distress, and to the widows, families, parents, or other near relatives of deceased members in right of a moderate provident annual subscription, — commutable, I observe, for a moderate provident life subscription, — and its members comprise the whole paid class of literary contributors to the press of the United Kingdom, and every class of reporters. The number of its members at this time last year was something below 100. At the present time it is somewhat above 170, not including 30 members of the press who are regular subscribers, but have not as yet qualified as regular members. This number is steadily on the increase, not only as regards the metropolitan press, but also as regards the provincial throughout the country. I have observed within

these few days that many members of the press at Manchester have lately at a meeting expressed a strong brotherly interest in this Institution, and a great desire to extend its operations, and to strengthen its hands, provided that something in the independent nature of life assurance and the purchase of deferred annuities could be introduced into its details, and always assuming that in it the metropolis and the provinces stand on perfectly equal ground. This appears to me to be a demand so very moderate, that I can hardly have a doubt of a response on the part of the managers, or of the beneficial and harmonious results. It only remains to add, on this head of desert, the agreeable circumstance that out of all the money collected in aid of the society during the last year more than one third came exclusively from the press.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, in regard to the last claim — the last point of desert — the hold upon the public — I think I may say that probably not one single individual in this great company has failed to-day to see a newspaper, or has failed to-day to hear something derived from a newspaper which was quite unknown to him or to her yesterday. Of all those restless crowds that have this day thronged the streets of this enormous city, the same may be said as the general gigantic rule. It may be said almost equally, of the brightest and the dullest, the largest and the least provincial town in the empire; and this, observe, not only as to the active, the industrious, and the healthy among the population, but also to the bedridden, the idle, the blind, and the deaf and dumb. Now, if the men who provide this all-pervading presence, this wonderful, ubiquitous newspaper, with every description of intelligence on every subject of human interest, collected with immense pains and immense patience, often by the exercise of a laboriously acquired faculty united to a natural aptitude, much of the work done in the night, at the sacrifice of rest and sleep, and (quite apart from the mental strain) by the constant overtasking of the two most delicate of the senses, sight and hearing — I say, if the men who, through the newspapers, from day to day, or from night to night, or from week to week, furnish the public with so much to remember, have not a righteous claim to be remembered by the public in return, then I declare before God I know no working class of the community who have.

It would be absurd, it would be impertinent, in such an

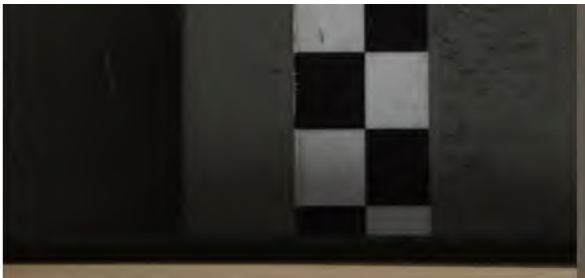
assembly as this, if I were to attempt to expatiate upon the extraordinary combination of remarkable qualities involved in the production of any newspaper. But assuming the majority of this associated body to be composed of reporters, because reporters, of one kind or other, compose the majority of the literary staff of almost every newspaper that is not a compilation, I would venture to remind you, if I delicately may, in the august presence of members of Parliament, how much we, the public, owe to the reporters if it were only for their skill in the two great sciences of condensation and rejection. Conceive what our sufferings, under an Imperial Parliament, however popularly constituted, under however glorious a constitution, would be if the reporters could not skip. Dr. Johnson, in one of his violent assertions, declared that "the man who was afraid of anything must be a scoundrel, sir." By no means binding myself to this opinion — though admitting that the man who is afraid of a newspaper will generally be found to be rather something like it — I must still freely own that I should approach my parliamentary debate with infinite fear and trembling if it were so unskilfully served up for my breakfast. Ever since the time when the old man and his son took their donkey home, which were the old Greek days, I believe, and probably ever since the time when the donkey went into the ark — perhaps he did not like his accommodation there — but certainly from that time downwards, he has objected to go in any direction required of him — from the remotest periods it has been found impossible to please everybody.

I do not for a moment seek to conceal that I know this Institution has been objected to. As an open fact challenging the freest discussion and inquiry, and seeking no sort of shelter or favour but what it can win, it has nothing, I apprehend, but itself to urge against objection. No institution conceived in perfect honesty and good faith has a right to object to being questioned to any extent, and any institution so based must be in the end the better for it. Moreover, that this society has been questioned in quarters deserving of the most respectful attention, I take to be an indisputable fact. Now, I for one have given that respectful attention, and I have come out of the discussion to where you see me. The whole circle of the arts is pervaded by institutions between which and this I can descry no difference. The painters' art has four or five such

institutions. The musicians' art, so generously and charmingly represented here, has likewise several such institutions. In my own art there is one, concerning the details of which my noble friend the president of the society and myself have torn each other's hair to a considerable extent, and which I would, if I could, assimilate more nearly to this. In the dramatic art there are four, and I never yet heard of any objection to their principle, except, indeed, in the cases of some famous actors of large gains, who, having through the whole period of their successes positively refused to establish a right in them, became, in their old age and decline, repentant suppliants for their bounty. It is urged against this particular Institution that it is objectionable because a parliamentary reporter, for instance, might report a subscribing M. P. in large, and a non-subscribing M. P. in little. Apart from the sweeping nature of this charge, which, it is to be observed, lays the unfortunate member and the unfortunate reporter under pretty much the same suspicion — apart from this consideration, I reply that it is notorious in all newspaper offices that every such man is reported according to the position he can gain in the public eye, and according to the force and weight of what he has to say. And if there were ever to be among the members of this society one so very foolish to his brethren, and so very dishonourable to himself, as venally to abuse his trust, I confidently ask those here, the best acquainted with journalism, whether they believe it possible that any newspaper so ill-conducted as to fail instantly to detect him could possibly exist as a thriving enterprise for one single twelvemonth? No, ladies and gentlemen, the blundering stupidity of such an offence would have no chance against the acute sagacity of newspaper editors. But I will go further, and submit to you that its commission, if it be to be dreaded at all, is far more likely on the part of some recreant camp-follower of a scattered, disunited, and half-recognised profession, than when there is a public opinion established in it, by the union of all classes of its members for the common good: the tendency of which union must, in the nature of things, be to raise the lower members of the press towards the higher, and never to bring the higher members to the lower level.

I hope I may be allowed, in the very few closing words that I feel a desire to say in remembrance of some circumstances,

rather special, attending my present occupation of this chair, to give those words something of a personal tone. I am not here advocating the case of a mere ordinary client of whom I have little or no knowledge. I hold a brief to-night for my brothers. I went into the gallery of the House of Commons as a parliamentary reporter when I was a boy not eighteen, and I left it — I can hardly believe the inexorable truth — nigh thirty years ago. I have pursued the calling of a reporter under circumstances of which many of my brethren at home in England here, many of my modern successors, can form no adequate conception. I have often transcribed for the printer, from my shorthand notes, important public speeches in which the strictest accuracy was required, and a mistake in which would have been to a young man severely compromising, writing on the palm of my hand, by the light of a dark lantern, in a post-chaise and four, galloping through a wild country, and through the dead of the night, at the then surprising rate of fifteen miles an hour. The very last time I was at Exeter, I strolled into the castle yard there to identify, for the amusement of a friend, the spot on which I once "took," as we used to call it, an election speech of my noble friend Lord Russell, in the midst of a lively fight maintained by all the vagabonds in that division of the county, and under such a pelting rain, that I remember two good-natured colleagues, who chanced to be at leisure, held a pocket-handkerchief over my note-book, after the manner of a state canopy in an ecclesiastical procession. I have worn my knees by writing on them on the old back row of the old gallery of the old House of Commons; and I have worn my feet by standing to write in a preposterous pen in the old House of Lords, where we used to be huddled together like so many sheep, — kept in waiting, say, until the woolsack might want restuffing. Returning home from excited political meetings in the country to the waiting press in London, I do verily believe I have been upset in almost every description of vehicle known in this country. I have been, in my time, belated on miry by-roads, towards the small hours, forty or fifty miles from London, in a wheelless carriage, with exhausted horses and drunken postboys, and have got back in time for publication, to be received with never-forgotten compliments by the late Mr. Black, coming in the broadest of Scotch from the broadest of hearts I ever knew.



Ladies and gentlemen, I mention these trivial things as an assurance to you that I never have forgotten the fascination of that old pursuit. The pleasure that I used to feel in the rapidity and dexterity of its exercise has never faded out of my breast. Whatever little cunning of hand or head I took to it, or acquired in it, I have so retained as that I fully believe I could resume it to-morrow, very little the worse from long disuse. To this present year of my life, when I sit in this hall, or where not, hearing a dull speech, the phenomenon does occur — I sometimes beguile the tedium of the moment by mentally following the speaker in the old, old way; and sometimes, if you can believe me, I even find my hand going on the table-cloth, taking an imaginary note of it all. Accept these little truths as a confirmation of what I know; as a confirmation of my undying interest in this old calling. Accept them as a proof that my feeling for the vocation of my youth is not a sentiment taken up to-night to be thrown away to-morrow — but is a faithful sympathy which is a part of myself. I verily believe — I am sure — that if I had never quitted my old calling I should have been foremost and zealous in the interests of this Institution, believing it to be a sound, a wholesome, and a good one. Ladies and gentlemen, I am to propose to you to drink "Prosperity to the Newspaper Press Fund," with which toast I will connect, as to its acknowledgment, a name that has shed new brilliancy on even the foremost newspaper in the world — the illustrious name of Mr. Russell.

XII

London, September 17, 1867

[At a public meeting of the Printers' Readers, held at the Salisbury Hotel.]

That as the last meeting was convened, not to hear him, but to hear a statement of facts and figures very nearly affecting the personal interests of the great majority of those present, his preface to the proceedings need be very brief. Of the details of the question he knew, of his own knowledge, absolutely nothing; but he had consented to occupy the chair on that occasion *at the request* of the London Association of Correctors of the *Press for two* reasons: first, because he thought that openness

and publicity in such cases were a very wholesome example very much needed at this time, and were highly becoming to a body of men associated with that great public safeguard — the Press; secondly, because he knew, from some slight practical experience, what the duties of correctors of the press were, and how their duties were usually discharged; and he could testify, and did testify, that they were not mechanical, that they were not mere matters of manipulation and routine; but that they required from those who performed them much natural intelligence, much superadded cultivation, readiness of reference, quickness of resource, an excellent memory, and a clear understanding. He most gratefully acknowledged that he had never gone through the sheets of any book that he had written, without having presented to him by the correctors of the press something that he had overlooked, some slight inconsistency into which he had fallen, some little lapse he had made — in short, without having set down in black and white some unquestionable indication that he had been closely followed through the work by a patient and trained mind, and not merely by a skilful eye. And in this declaration he had not the slightest doubt that the great body of his brother and sister writers would, as a plain act of justice, readily concur. For these plain reasons he was there; and being there he begged to assure them that every one present — that every speaker — would have a patient hearing, whatever his opinions might be.

XIII

London, November 2, 1867

[On Saturday evening, November 2, 1867, a grand complimentary farewell dinner was given to Mr. Dickens at the Freemasons' Tavern on the occasion of his revisiting the United States of America. Lord Lytton officiated as chairman, and proposed as a toast — "A Prosperous Voyage, Health, and Long Life to our Illustrious Guest and Countryman, Charles Dickens." The toast was drunk with all the honours, and one cheer more.]

My Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen, — No thanks that I can offer you can express my sense of my reception by this great assemblage, or can in the least suggest to you how deep the glowing words of my friend the chairman, and your acceptance of them, have sunk into my heart. But both combined

have so greatly shaken the composure I am used to command in the presence of an audience, that I hope you may observe in me some traces of an eloquence more expressive than the richest words. To say that I am fervently grateful to you, is to say nothing; to say that I can never forget this beautiful sight, is to say nothing; to say that it brings upon me a rush of emotion, not only in its present pride and honour, but in the thoughts of its remembrance in the future by those who are dearest to me, is to say nothing; — but to feel all this for the moment, even almost to pain, is very much indeed. Mercutio says of the wound in his breast, dealt him by the hand of a foe, that — "'T is not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 't is enough, 't will serve." [1] I may say of the wound in my breast, newly dealt to me by the hands of my friends, that it is deeper than the soundless sea, and wider than the whole Catholic Church. And I may safely add that it has for the moment almost stricken me dumb. I should be more than human, and I assure you I am very human indeed, if I could look around upon this brilliant representative company and not feel greatly thrilled and stirred by the presence of so many of my brother artists, not only in literature, but also in the sister arts, especially painting, among whose professors, living and unhappily dead, are many of my oldest and best friends. I hope that I may, without presumption, regard this thronging of my brothers around me as a testimony on their part that they believe that the cause of art generally has been safe in my keeping, and that they think it has never been falsely dealt with by me. Your resounding cheers just now would have been but so many cruel reproaches to me if I could not here declare that, from the earliest days of my career down to this proud night, I have always tried to be true to my calling. Never unduly to assert it, on the one hand, and never, on any pretence or consideration, to permit it to be patronised in my person, on the other, has been the steady endeavour of my life; and I have occasionally been vain enough to hope that I may leave its social position in England something better than I found it. Similarly, and equally I hope without presumption, I trust that I may take this general representation of the public here, through so many orders, pursuits, and degrees, as a token that the public believe that, with a

[1] *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III., sc. 1.

[illegible] of imperfections
as a writer, in my soul
them as they have ever
[illegible] the inner circle
[illegible] I [illegible] a duty to
my [illegible] times he[illegible]
cliques, and coteries and
and keeping that man de[illegible]
unbelievers, and mutual [illegible]
what other dragons in th[illegible]
when I was very young,
without companion, introdu[illegible]
put in evidence in this plac[illegible]
dragons yet. So have I he[illegible]
times, much generally to the
little or no love of art for i[illegible]
greatly care to acknowledge
own experience has uniformly
say that of my countrymen, a[illegible]
country.

And now passing to the imm[illegible]
this great h[illegible], the story of
very easily [illegible]fly told. S[illegible]
and entirely [illegible]neration ha[illegible]
Since I was [illegible]efore, most o[illegible]
have been [illegible] and publish[illegible]
the books h[illegible] together an[illegible]
length num[illegible]ose who h[illegible]
read me, n[illegible]sirring a l[illegible]
between us, [illegible]ressed a str[illegible]
myself. Th[illegible]t first con[illegible]
channels and [illegible]hannels, ha[illegible]
by an imme[illegible]lation of
associations [illegible]ls, all
homely, cordi[illegible]
me. — I had [illegible]
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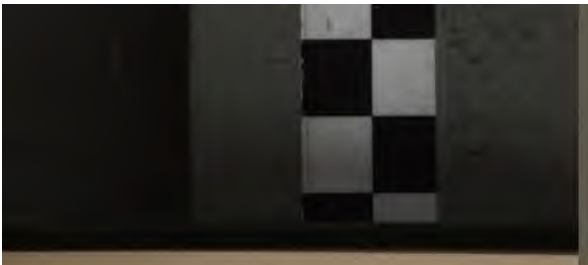
[illegible] my hou[illegible]
torn them fro[illegible]



shall be upon the sea. You will readily conceive that I am inspired besides by a natural desire to see for myself the astonishing change and progress of a quarter of a century over there, to grasp the hands of many faithful friends whom I left upon those shores, to see the faces of a multitude of new friends upon whom I have never looked, and last, not least, to use my best endeavour to lay down a third cable of intercommunication and alliance between the old world and the new. Twelve years ago, when Heaven knows I little thought I should ever be bound upon the voyage which now lies before me, I wrote in that form of my writings which obtains by far the most extensive circulation, these words of the American nation: "I know full well, whatever little motes my beamy eyes may have descried in theirs, that they are a kind, large-hearted, generous, and great people." In that faith I am going to see them again; in that faith I shall, please God, return from them in the spring; in that same faith to live and to die. I told you in the beginning that I could not thank you enough, and Heaven knows I have most thoroughly kept my word. If I may quote one other short sentence from myself, let it imply all that I have left unsaid, and yet most deeply feel. Let it, putting a girdle round the earth, comprehend both sides of the Atlantic at once in this moment, and so, as Tiny Tim observed, "God bless us every one."

XIV

NEW YORK, APRIL 20, 1868

[Mr. Dickens's last reading in the United States was given at the Steinway Hall on the above date. The task finished, he was about to retire, but a tremendous burst of applause stopped him. He came forward and spoke thus:—]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — The shadow of one word has impended over me this evening, and the time has come at length when the shadow must fall. It is but a very short one, but the weight of such things is not measured by their length, and two much shorter words express the round of our human existence. When I was reading "David Copperfield" a few evenings since, I felt there was more than usual significance in the words of Peggotty, "My future life lies over the sea." And when I closed this book just now, I felt most keenly that

the green English summer weather.
a mere public audience, but rather as
and ever with the greatest gratitude
ation. Ladies and gentlemen, I beg
bless you, and God bless the land in

XV

SYDENHAM, AUGUST

[The International University Boat Race ha
the London Rowing Club invited the crews to
on the next Monday. The dinner was follow
technics.]

GENTLEMEN: Flushed with firewor
you as about to imitate those gorgeo
brief spirt and then dying out. And,
visitor of the London Rowing Club
occasion, I will beg, in the name of
present — always excepting the disti
the cause of our meeting — to thank t
esty and the courtesy with which he h
the most agreeable part of his eveni
graceful in him to do this because he c
he might very easily do it himself, as
in which it is according to good taste
things that the great social wise appeal

eternal adieu.[1] I take up the president's glove, on the contrary, as a proof of his much higher worth, and of my real interest in the cause in which it was thrown down, and I now profess my readiness to do even injustice to the duty which he has assigned me.

Gentlemen, a very remarkable and affecting volume was published in the United States within a short time before my last visit to that hospitable land, containing ninety-five biographies of young men, for the most part well born and well nurtured, and trained in various peaceful pursuits of life, who, when the flag of their country waved them from those quiet paths in which they were seeking distinction of various kinds, took arms in the dread civil war which elicited so much bravery on both sides, and died in the defence of their country. These great spirits displayed extraordinary aptitude in the acquisition, even in the invention, of military tactics, in the combining and commanding of great masses of men, in surprising readiness of self-resource for the general good, in humanely treating the sick and the wounded, and in winning to themselves a very rare amount of personal confidence and trust. They had all risen to be distinguished soldiers; they had all done deeds of great heroism; they had all combined with their valour and self-devotion a serene cheerfulness, a quiet modesty, and a truly Christian spirit; and they had all been educated in one school — Harvard University.

Gentlemen, nothing was more remarkable in these fine descendants of our forefathers than the invincible determination with which they fought against odds, and the undauntable spirit with which they resisted defeat. I ask you, who will say after last Friday that Harvard University is less true to herself in peace than she was in war? I ask you, who will not recognise in her boat's crew the leaven of her soldiers, and who does not feel that she has now a greater right than ever to be proud of her sons, and take these sons to her breast when they return with resounding acclamations? It is related of the Duke of Wellington that he once told a lady who foolishly protested that she would like to see a great victory that there was only one thing worse than a great victory, and that was a great defeat.

But, gentlemen, there is another sense in which to use the

[1] *Robert Browning: Bells and Pomegranates.*

term a great defeat. Such is the defeat of a handful of daring fellows who make a preliminary dash of three or four thousand stormy miles to meet great conquerors on their own domain — who do not want the stimulus of friends and home, but who sufficiently hear and feel their own dear land in the shouts and cheers of another — and who strive to the last with a desperate tenacity that makes the beating of them a new feather in the proudest cap. Gentlemen, you agree with me that such a defeat is a great, noble part of a manly, wholesome action; and I say that it is in the essence and life-blood of such a defeat to become at last sure victory.

Now, gentlemen, you know perfectly well the toast I am going to propose, and you know equally well that in thus glancing first towards our friends of the white stripes, I merely anticipate and respond to the instinctive courtesy of Oxford towards our brothers from a distance — a courtesy extending, I hope, and I do not doubt, to any imaginable limits except allowing them to take the first place in last Friday's match, if they could by any human and honourable means be kept in the second. I will not avail myself of the opportunity provided for me by the absence of the greater part of the Oxford crew — indeed, of all but one, and that its most modest and devoted member — I will not avail myself of the golden opportunity considerately provided for me to say a great deal in honour of the Oxford crew. I know that the gentleman who attends here attends under unusual anxieties and difficulties, and that if he were less in earnest his filial affection could not possibly allow him to be here.

It is therefore enough for me, gentlemen, and enough for you, that I should say here, and now, that we all unite with one accord in regarding the Oxford crew as the pride and flower of England — and that we should consider it very weak indeed to set anything short of England's very best in opposition to or competition with America; though it certainly must be confessed — I am bound in common justice and honour to admit it — it must be confessed, in disparagement of the Oxford men, as I heard a discontented gentleman remark last Friday night, about ten o'clock, when he was baiting a very small horse in the Strand — he was one of eleven with pipes in a chaise-cart — I say it must be admitted, in disparagement of the Oxford men, on the authority of this gentleman, that they have won so

often that they could afford to lose a little now, and that "they ought to do it, but they won't."

Gentlemen, in drinking to both crews, and in offering the poor testimony of our thanks in acknowledgment of the gallant spectacle which they presented to countless thousands last Friday, I am sure I express not only your feeling, and my feeling, and the feeling of the Blue, but also the feeling of the whole people of England, when I cordially give them welcome to our English waters and English ground, and also bid them "God-speed" in their voyage home. As the greater includes the less, and the sea holds the river, so I think it is no very bold augury to predict that in the friendly contests yet to come and to take place, I hope, on both sides of the Atlantic — there are great river triumphs for Harvard University yet in store. Gentlemen, I warn the English portion of this audience that these are very dangerous men. Remember that it was an undergraduate of Harvard University who served as a common seaman two years before the mast,[1] and who wrote about the best sea book in the English tongue. Remember that it was one of those young American gentlemen who sailed his mite of a yacht across the Atlantic in mid-winter, and who sailed in her to sink or swim with the men who believed in him.

And now, gentlemen, in conclusion, animated by your cordial acquiescence, I will take upon myself to assure our brothers from a distance that the utmost enthusiasm with which they can be received on their return home will find a ready echo in every corner of England — and further, that none of their immediate countrymen — I use the qualifying term immediate, for we are, as our president said, fellow-countrymen, thank God — that none of their compatriots who saw, or who will read of, what they did in this great race, can be more thoroughly imbued with a sense of their indomitable courage and their high deserts than are their rivals and their hosts to-night. Gentlemen, I beg to propose to you to drink the crews of Harvard and Oxford University, and I beg to couple with that toast the names of Mr. Simmons and Mr. Willan.

[1] R. H. Dana.

XVI

ST. JAMES'S HALL, MARCH 15, 1870

[At the close of the farewell reading.]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — It would be worse than idle — for it would be hypocritical and unfeeling — if I were to disguise that I close this episode in my life with feelings of very considerable pain. For some fifteen years, in this hall and in many kindred places, I have had the honour of presenting my own cherished ideas before you for your recognition, and, in closely observing your reception of them, have enjoyed an amount of artistic delight and instruction which, perhaps, is given to few men to know. In this task, and in every other I have ever undertaken, as a faithful servant of the public, always imbued with a sense of duty to them, and always striving to do his best, I have been uniformly cheered by the readiest response, the most generous sympathy, and the most stimulating support. Nevertheless, I have thought it well, at the full flood-tide of your favour, to retire upon those older associations between us, which date from much further back than these, and henceforth to devote myself exclusively to the art that first brought us together. Ladies and gentlemen, in but two short weeks from this time I hope that you may enter, in your own homes, on a new series of readings, at which my assistance will be indispensable;[1] but from these garish lights I vanish now for evermore, with a heartfelt, grateful, respectful, and affectionate farewell.

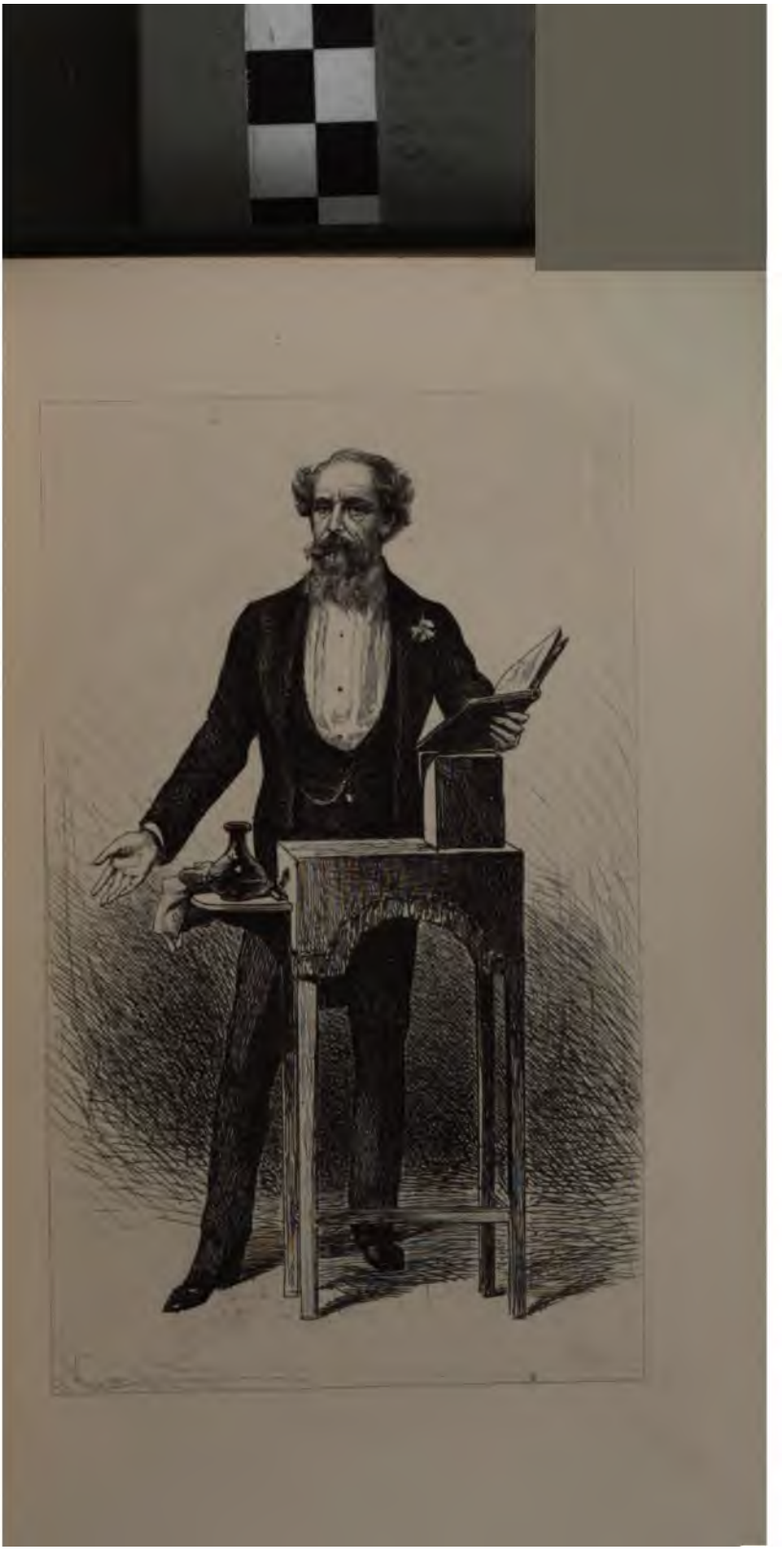
XVII

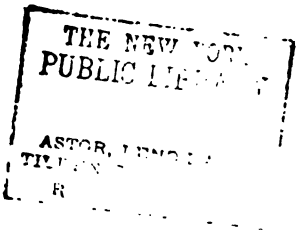
LONDON, MAY 2, 1870

[This speech, the last public address by Mr. Dickens, was on the occasion of the Second Exhibition of the Royal Academy in their new galleries in Piccadilly. The toast was "Literature."]

MR. PRESIDENT, your Royal Highnesses, my Lords and Gentlemen, — I beg to acknowledge the toast with which you have done me the great honour of associating my name. I beg to acknowledge it on behalf of the brotherhood of literature, present and absent, not forgetting an illustrious wanderer from

[1] Alluding to the forthcoming serial story of *Edwin Drood*.

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the fold, whose tardy return to it we all hail with delight, and who now sits — or lately did sit — within a few chairs of or on your left hand. I hope I may also claim to acknowledge the toast on behalf of the sisterhood of literature also, although that "better half of human nature," to which Mr. Gladstone rendered his graceful tribute, is unworthily represented here, in the present state of its rights and wrongs, by the devouring monster, man.

All the arts, and many of the sciences, bear witness that women, even in their present oppressed condition, can attain to quite as great distinction, and can win quite as lofty names as men. Their emancipation (as I am given to understand) drawing very near, there is no saying how soon they may "push us from our stools" at these tables, or how soon our better half of human nature, standing in this place of mine, may eloquently depreciate mankind, addressing another better half of human nature sitting in the president's chair.

The literary visitors of the Royal Academy to-night desire me to congratulate their hosts on a very interesting exhibition, in which risen excellence supremely asserts itself, and from which promise of a brilliant succession in time to come is not wanting. They naturally see with especial interest the writings and persons of great men — historians, philosophers, poets, and novelists, vividly illustrated around them here. And they hope that they may modestly claim to have rendered some little assistance towards the production of many of the pictures in this magnificent gallery. For without the patient labours of some among them, unhistoric history might have long survived in this place; and but for the researches and wandering of others among them, the most preposterous countries, the most impossible peoples, and the absurdest superstitions, manners, and customs might have usurped the place of truth upon these walls. Nay, there is no knowing, Sir Francis Grant, what unlike portraits you yourself might have painted if you had been left, with your sitters, to idle pens, unchecked reckless rumours, and undenounced lying malevolence.

I cannot forbear, before I resume my seat, adverting to a sad theme (the recent death of Daniel Maclise), to which his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales made allusion, and to which the president referred with the eloquence of genuine feeling. Since I first entered the public lists, a very young

man indeed, it has been my constant fortune to number amongst my nearest and dearest friends members of the Royal Academy who have been its grace and pride. They have so dropped from my side one by one that I already begin to feel like the Spanish monk of whom Wilkie tells, who had grown to believe that the only realities around him were the pictures which he loved, and that all the moving life he saw, or ever had seen, was a shadow and a dream.

For many years I was one of the two most intimate friends and most constant companions of the late Mr. Maclise. Of his genius in his chosen art I will venture to say nothing here; but of his prodigious fertility of mind and wonderful wealth of intellect I may confidently assert that they would have made him, if he had been so minded, at least as great a writer as he was a painter. The gentlest and most modest of men, the freshest as to his generous appreciation of young aspirants, and the frankest and largest-hearted as to his peers, incapable of a sordid or ignoble thought, gallantly sustaining the true dignity of his vocation, without one grain of self-ambition, wholesomely natural at the last as at the first, "in wit a man, simplicity a child," no artist, of whatsoever denomination, I make bold to say, ever went to his rest leaving a golden memory more pure from dross, or having devoted himself with a truer chivalry to the art goddess whom he worshipped.

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